

THE
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IT was clearly proved before Vice-Chancellor Sir W. P. Wood, by affidavits from eminent hospital Physicians of London, that Dr. J. Collis Browne was the discoverer of Chlorodyne; that they prescribe it largely, and mean no other than Dr. Browne's.—See Times, Jan. 12, 1864. The public, therefore, are cautioned against using any other than Dr. J. COLLIS BROWNE'S CHLORODYNE.

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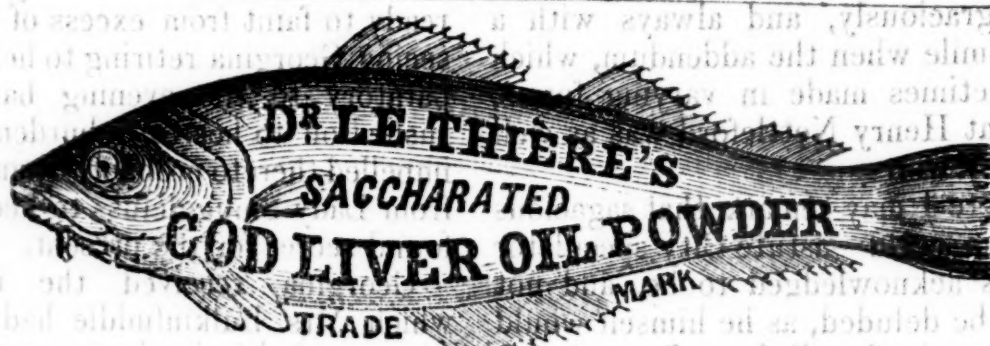
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SINGED MOTHS.

A CITY ROMANCE.

By C. J. COLLINS, Author of "Sackville Chase," "The Man in Chains," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XIX.

AN INTERVIEW AND A REVELATION.

THERE was a very interesting episode in the proceedings at the grand fête at Ganges Hall which I have not recorded in the chapter devoted to that interesting day. Henry Nettleford was one of the guests at the banquet, but he was not a conspicuous one. In fact, as the day advanced, the far-seeing and sagacious sheriff several times wished that the young man had not been invited. And yet Henry Nettleford on this day very much advanced himself in the good opinion of Sir Robert Smugglefuss, who could not but inwardly applaud the retiring modesty of his son's friend, the more so perhaps that it was in strict accordance with his own notion at that moment of what was true propriety. Henry Nettleford had never made any formal pretensions to the hand of Mary Smugglefuss, but it was nevertheless well understood in the household of the sheriff what the footing was upon which the Eton schoolmate of young Robert Smugglefuss had been received. To none was it known perhaps more unmistakeably than to Georgina. As to Robert Smugglefuss junior, he made no mystery of the matter, but frequently openly spoke in the family circle of the devilish good match that Harry Nettleford would be for Mary, an intimation that Mary would receive graciously, and always with a pleased smile when the addendum, which was sometimes made in varying forms, stated that Henry Nettleford was as well off as they were.

And here I may remark, that sagacious man of the world—astute City speculator as he was acknowledged to be, and not easily to be deluded, as he himself would have boasted—Sir Robert Smugglefuss was content with the representations which his son had made with regard to Henry Nettleford—that is, so far, and up to the time of which I am writing. What his course would have been in the event of the formal declaration, and the usual sequent demand, it is impossible

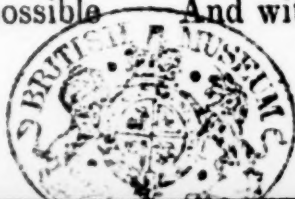
for any one now to say, because the contingency never arose.

When it was known that the nabob had, in the course of the evening of the fête, made an offer of his hand and his heart to Mary, and had suggested that she might allow him to endow her with all his worldly goods, according to the prescriptive ritual in that case made and provided, and that Mary, with the necessary fervour, had accepted the offer with the usual reservation with regard to the necessary appeal to the paternal authority, both Sir Robert and Lady Smugglefuss felt somewhat embarrassed as to the bearing they should assume towards Henry Nettleford. The lady, however, was fully equal to the occasion, and after a brief consultation with her lord, she settled the matter by saying, "Don't take no notice of him," and the sheriff, pondering upon the suggestion for a moment, thought it might be adopted, and adopted it. The worthy couple also came to the resolution that they would not inform their son until the next day of the course that the family events had taken.

But the brilliant secret could not be kept from Georgina any more than it could be from Mrs. Bulkinfuddle, who considered, and with good foundation in fact and reason, that she had been much instrumental in bringing about so brilliant a turn in the fortunes of Mary as the proposed alliance exhibited. Indeed, the stout and demonstrative lady was almost ready to faint from excess of bliss, when seeing Georgina retiring to her room preparatory to the evening banquet, she rushed off to her to unburden her mind, impelled thereto probably by an injunction from Lady Smugglefuss to keep it a profound secret for the present.

Georgina received the information which Mrs. Bulkinfuddle had to convey with mingled feelings of regret and satisfaction, antagonistic though they were, but with no surprise, and she listened almost silently to the glowing language with which Mrs. Bulkinfuddle described the grand future that was opening to the family of the Smugglefusses.

And with a sense of the important part



which she had played towards the advent of this brilliant future strong upon her, Mrs. Bulkinfuddle said—

“And what, my dear Georgy, did you think of the presentation?”

“Do you mean when you brought Mary to the foot of the steps of the pavilion, Mrs. Bulkinfuddle?”

“Yes,” answered Mrs. Bulkinfuddle, in a tone of ecstatic delight.

“Mary must have had great moral courage to have gone through it,” said Georgina, rather sadly.

“My dear, she went through it in such a manner as to show that she is worthy of the exalted position destiny has marked out for her,” Mrs. Bulkinfuddle said.

“You think this alliance will take place, then?” Georgina inquired, looking earnestly into the glowing countenance of Mrs. Bulkinfuddle.

“Take place, my dear!” exclaimed the stout lady, her face beaming with the glow which the anticipation of the coming glory threw into it. “Why, your papa and mamma have already in their own minds fixed when it shall be.”

“Already!” exclaimed Georgina, in a tone of much surprise.

“Yes, and quite right too. Why, I should say, my dear, there has been nothing equal to it since the coronation.”

“Of course it is a very grand alliance, Mrs. Bulkinfuddle; but do you think that Mary was altogether free to make it.”

“I won’t be so hypocritical as to say I don’t know what you mean,” said Mrs. Bulkinfuddle, in a burst of disingenuousness; “but surely that young man has nobody but himself to blame. I have always thought him too reserved and shy, and so I have reasoned with your dear mamma, that on that account he was not altogether suited for Mary; and as I understand that nothing formal has passed between your papa and that young man—indeed I believe your papa has no notion whatever that there is anything between them,—and therefore was it to be expected that Mary should ever hesitate when you might almost say a diadem was at her feet? Ah! my dear, when you have lived as long in the world as I have, you will be better able to understand the advantage of having a bird in the hand.”

“Why all the world will say it is Othello and Desdemona in real life,” said Georgina, the serious expression that had previously rested upon her countenance

giving place to one of hilarity at the suggestion she had made.

“Oh, they can’t say that, because the nabob isn’t black, like Othello. Why, I have seen many of the gipsy tribe quite as dark as he is—there is one especially that has been stamped upon my mind for eight-and-twenty years.”

“Dear me! he must have made an impression upon you,” said Georgina, laughing in spite of herself.

“An impression that has never been effaced, Georgina,” said Mrs. Bulkinfuddle, solemnly. “It was the year before I married Mr. Bulkinfuddle, and it was at Ascot races. Mr. Bulkinfuddle had made up a party, and of course I was one. I was leaning over the side of the carriage looking at something or other, when the gipsy man came up. He was tall, handsome, dark-olive colour, and eyes that I should think were what the basilisks have, for they seemed to run you through and through. And that tall gipsy man, who was dressed in that picturesque absence of repair in the garments which throws such an air of romance about the gipsy tribe, asked me, in a deep, melodious voice, if I wished to have my fortune told. ‘Of course,’ said Mr. Bulkinfuddle—he was an exceedingly jocose man in his youth, my dear—and so that tall gipsy man took my hand, and looking me full in the face with his piercing eye, uttered these mysterious words, which I have never forgotten—*‘Luoy eb a taf nu!’*”

“Dear me!” cried Georgina, “what’s the meaning of that?”

“It was the patter language, Mr. Bulkinfuddle said, and was a kind of incantation—they reverse words somehow, I don’t know how it is: the most remarkable part of it is, my dear, that my name is Louisa; and then he told me in straight English that I should marry a great swell, at which poor dear Mr. Bulkinfuddle laughed to that degree that I thought he would bite his tongue. But what do you think, Georgina?—when we returned home I found that my purse was gone, and with it my whole quarter’s money. I’ve never forgotten that gipsy man from that hour to this.”

* * * *

It matters not how, in the course of the evening Henry Nettleford found himself alone in the conservatory with Georgina. It is sufficient that they are there together, and they are in subdued but earnest conversation.

"You are very much attached to Mary," Georgina is saying, in a slightly agitated tone of voice.

"I could have loved her ardently—fondly."

"You could!—you do?"

"No longer."

"Can a change so sudden come over you?"

"Would you have me love a trifle?"

"No, no, no—indeed I would not," cried Georgina, hastily, and then she seemed to shrink into herself, as it were, scared at the impetuosity which she had exhibited.

"You cannot suppose, Georgina, that I have been blind to-day. I hope you do not suppose that I have such a small measure of sagacity as not to have perceived the course—that what I thought was a heart in Mary has been taking."

"You have perceived it—then I need not tell you," said Georgina, timidly.

"No, you need not tell me that which she herself has so publicly proclaimed."

"Publicly proclaimed!" cried Georgina, in a tone of astonishment. "How do you mean?"

"Why, has she not proclaimed her heartlessness—ostentatiously proclaimed it—throughout the proceedings of this day?"

"Not the proposition itself?" said Georgina.

Henry Nettleford looked at her inquiringly. The proposition—what did she mean?

"I thought that Mary had only informed papa; but you seem to say, Mr. Nettleford, that she has made no secret of it at all."

"She has made a secret of it only to those who have not seen her," said Henry Nettleford, bitterly.

"I am sure papa is under quite a different impression, then."

"It cannot be, Georgina. I could see that he watched her as I did—he could not have failed to observe the bearing of the guest and the delight that dazzled Mary."

"True; as you yourself have just said, everybody must have observed that," said Georgina.

"Why then did you seem so surprised when I said that Mary had made no secret of her conduct?"

"I meant with reference to the proposition."

"Proposition! You made use of

that word before—what do you mean, Georgina?"

"Then you do *not* know," exclaimed Georgina, in a tone of voice that indicated that she felt something like alarm at having broached the subject.

"I do not know what?" inquired Henry Nettleford, earnestly.

Georgina, as she looked into his face, was much agitated. Henry Nettleford gently took her hand, and she did not attempt to resist the appropriation. He said—

"Georgina, I took credit to myself a few moments back for much sagacity—clearly more credit than I was entitled to; for I can see now that there is some mystery connected with to-day which I have not fathomed, perhaps not observed."

There was no reason why he should do it except that that little hand was in his but he fondled it and held it quite own, lovingly, as he said softly—

"What is it that I do not know that has occurred to-day?"

"I must not tell you."

"Must not tell me?"

"No; you will know to-morrow."

"Know to-morrow!" thought Henry Nettleford.

The words seem to sink into his heart, and the truth is dawning upon him without a revelation from Georgina. The pallor upon his cheek—the open lips—the heaving chest proclaim that, in spite of himself, the terrible, the unexpected truth comes like a blow upon his mind, even though that truth has but as yet assumed the form of an unshapen suggestion in his own heart. He thought he had plucked out the unseen chain that had gradually coiled itself about his heart, but he now discovered that there were links remaining still.

After a lengthened pause, during which Henry Nettleford has held that little hand within his own, he says—

"Georgina, I think I know the mystery now."

She merely lifts her eyes again to his.

"This Indian grandee has laid himself at Mary's feet—is not that so?"

In words Georgina makes no answer; but words are not required, the scathing truth is forced into his mind by the agency of a gentle look.

Henry Nettleford was not impetuous or impulsive generally, but just now he would seem to be both. He is flushed even as though he were angry, but he is

not angry. There is a tumult of passion rising in his breast, but still of himself he seems to be soothed by the pressure of that delicate little hand that is within his own. Even as he holds it thus, he has formed a strange resolve in his own mind, as though he were actuated by some new desire, or hope, or ambition. He thinks of Mary, and in imagination sees her at the feet of the swarthy rival who has plucked her from his arms, and so comes on his strange resolve. As he had loved her before, so would he seek the means to justify his hatred now and henceforth. The revulsion may be heart-scathing, but it shall be accomplished. So runs the swift current of his agitated thoughts.

"Georgina, with all my heart and soul I free her from every implied obligation to me!"

Georgina made no reply, but bent her eyes upon the ground. Her thought was that Henry Nettleford had a noble heart indeed.

Why! the bearing of the young man is changed suddenly. He is almost light and gay. Indeed he laughs, as he exclaims—

"If you and Mary will consent to accompany me to-morrow, I will show you a sight in the City which you will probably never forget."

Georgina said she should be delighted to go.

CHAPTER XX.

MARY AND GEORGINA VISIT TOWER HILL.

"DANIEL," said the marine-store dealer on Tower Hill to the Hunchback, "I have received a letter from my son Henry, in which he says he intends to bring two ladies with him this morning to look over our establishment, young ladies from the country, who are coming up to see the sights of London. Who can they be, I wonder?"

"Does he not say, sir?" inquired the Hunchback.

"No, but he says this, Daniel—that I am not to recognise him when he comes, and that I have to instruct Daniel—that's you, you know—to the same effect. What freak is this, do you think?"

"No freak, you may depend on it. No, Mr. Nettleford; your son, sir, is not the sort of young man to indulge in freaks of any kind," said the Hunchback, very respectfully, but in a tone he might have adopted if he had been quietly resenting some im-

plied imputations upon Henry Nettleford.

"I did not know that he had any friends in the country," said the marine-store dealer; "some relatives, I suppose, of a school connexion."

"Very likely, sir," answered the Hunchback.

"But what can he possibly have to show them here?—surely he cannot call my old shop one of the sights of London!" and the marine-store dealer laughed as he said this—it amused him.

"Remember, it is a very interesting spot this, sir, historically," said the Hunchback. "Perhaps Mr. Henry wishes to point out to them some of the exact spots that have been made so terribly famous in history in this locality."

"Well, but my old shop, Daniel, has never been terribly famous in history," said the marine-store dealer, laughing.

"That we don't know, sir."

"I think I do," said the marine-store dealer, decisively.

"Strange scenes have been witnessed from these very windows, sir," suggested the Hunchback.

"Well, perhaps so, Daniel, I did not think of that; but is this house old enough for that?"

"It is not so old as the terrible public crimes that used to be so frequent out there," and the Hunchback pointed in the direction of the Tower; "but from these windows scenes of judicial massacre may have been witnessed, and also scenes of public outrage, of riot, and popular madness."

"I know to what you allude, Daniel; but I can't think that can be the object of Henry's bringing these girls here; it's something connected with himself, you may depend upon it."

"And if it is so," said the Hunchback, warmly, "the object, whatever it is, will be a good one."

"Oh, Daniel, I have no fear on that score. Well then," continued the marine-store dealer, gaily, "we must, I suppose, Daniel, receive him with all due solemnity, and as though we had never seen him before in our lives."

"Is that the purport of his wish, sir?" the Hunchback inquired, seriously.

"He says that neither of us must recognise him when he comes. I confess that I feel a great deal of curiosity to know what the mystery is. I have no doubt it is something he has got into his head that he fancies will please me;" and the

marine-store dealer smiled to himself as though he enjoyed the thought.

"What time does Mr. Henry say he will be here, sir?" inquired the Hunchback.

"At about two o'clock."

"Oh, then I shall have plenty of time to get the place a little arranged and in order," said the Hunchback, turning to leave the room to commence the arrangement he referred to.

"Arrange nothing, Daniel," said the marine-store dealer, decisively. "Depend upon it that Harry has some special purpose in this visit, and therefore he will expect to find the shop as it always is, and not made up, as it were, for a holiday occasion."

"You are right, sir," said the Hunchback, "I did not think of that; I only thought of how we could pay the most respect to Mr. Henry."

"And shall I tell you how to do that, Daniel?"

"How, sir?"

"By humouring the wish exactly as he has expressed it. You may be sure, Daniel, that he wishes these girls, for some purpose or other, to see this storehouse of refuse and rubbish just as it always is, and he shall see it so."

It is sufficient to say that Henry Nettleford, with the assistance of Georgina, had induced Mary to make the pilgrimage which he had indicated in his letter to his father. Of course he had not told her where she was going—it might have been to some storehouse of jewels to present her with a remembrance of her recent triumph, for he had quite charmed both Sir Robert and Lady Smugglefuss by the manner in which he had congratulated them upon their daughter's conquest. It is true that Mary was not altogether well pleased at his assumed indifference, because she had anticipated that he would be most romantically overwhelmed with grief at the turn events had taken. Indeed this notion had constituted a considerable portion of the triumph she had enjoyed.

Mary Smugglefuss knew nothing of the object of the visit to the City which Henry Nettleford had proposed, and she was full of curiosity with respect to it. She had an impression that it had something to do with the nabob, but she could extract nothing definite from her quondam lover.

When Georgina informed her mother of Henry Nettleford's desire, Lady

Smugglefuss was so full of grand ideas consequent upon the brilliant future that was dawning upon her daughter, that it was with great difficulty that she could bring herself down to the necessary level to comprehend the subject; and even when she had partially succeeded in doing so, she had recourse to the sympathetic advice of Mrs. Bulkinfuddle.

"A remarkably judicious young man," said that lady, when she had been informed of the temper in which Henry Nettleford had received the intimation of the intentions of the nabob towards Mary. "You may depend upon it, my dear Lady Smugglefuss, that that is a very remarkable young man—nothing flighty, nothing loose, nothing frivolous about him. He is a young man of sound sense, who sees the thing in its proper light, and I should not be at all surprised if it turns out that this pretended visit to some show in the City is only a pretext for an opportunity to make up to Georgina."

"Lord bless me! well, I never thought of such a thing in my born days," cried Lady Smugglefuss, in a tone of pleased consternation.

And the consent was given for the trip into the City, because, as Mrs. Bulkinfuddle said, the young man had splendid expectations. Georgina might go a very long way further and fare worse.

And all this was mere idle surmise on the part of Mrs. Bulkinfuddle.

Sir Robert Smugglefuss's private carriage has arrived on Tower Hill on the opposite side to that on which the marine-store dealer's shop is situated, and Henry Nettleford assists Mary and Georgina Smugglefuss to descend. The coachman is desired to remain there until they are ready to return, and then Henry Nettleford escorts his fair charges across the open space of Tower Hill.

"Why, wherever is it that you are taking us to?" said Mary.

"Do you see this shop?"

"What, this wretched-looking place—this rag-shop?"

"Yes."

"What of it?" inquired Mary, with a kind of shudder.

"Do you see that larger building there?"

"Yes."

"That is the Royal Mint."

"Oh, is that where all the money is made?" exclaimed Mary, with enthusiasm.

"That is where they transmute gold into talismanic coin. I knew that you

were much interested in these transmutations, and I have brought you here to show you a process by which that which is worthless is sometimes transmuted into that which is sterling gold. There is a kind of wizard who lives in this place—this shop of rubbish as it appears—I want you to see him.”

Mary, with a slight expression of alarm upon her countenance, turns to her sister, and, in a whisper, asks her if they had better go in. Georgina answers emphatically, and with the utmost confidence—“Certainly; why not?” and then, as though she wished to decide the question unequivocally, she said aloud to Henry Nettleford, “It is very kind of you, Mr. Nettleford, to take all this trouble for our gratification.”

The next minute the three were in the marine-store dealer’s shop.

“What an accumulation of worthless rubbish!” said Mary, with a kind of shiver, and looking round upon the piles of rags that were in the shop.

“It might almost be said to typify the world,” whispered Henry Nettleford.

“How so?” inquired Mary.

“Appearances are nearly always so deceptive,” he replied, with a meaning look.

As soon as the party entered the shop the Hunchback came forward and greeted them without recognising by any special mode of address Henry Nettleford.

“I believe your name is Targin, is it not?” said Henry Nettleford to the Hunchback.

The Hunchback bowed an acknowledgment.

“Is your employer at home?”

“He is in his room at the back, sir. Shall I call him?”

“No, you need not call him,” said Henry Nettleford; “but take my card to him, and tell him that the two daughters of the Sheriff of London desire to look over his establishment.”

As the Hunchback took the card, he stared with open-mouthed astonishment first at Mary and then at Georgina, and this caused him to assume a rather ludicrous appearance in the eyes of the young ladies. He made no remark as he received the card from Henry Nettleford, but at once conveyed it to the region behind the shop. As soon as he had disappeared, Georgina said—“What a strange looking being; is this your wizard’s familiar, Mr. Nettleford?” and she laughed as she put the question.

“Targin, did you say his name was?” Mary inquired.

“Yes,” said Henry Nettleford, in a kind of inquiring tone, or at all events with an inquiring look.

“I have heard that name somewhere, I am sure,” said Mary, ruminating.

“It is an uncommon name,” Harry Nettleford observed.

“I suppose that is the reason I remember it,” Mary said.

The Hunchback returned, and said that the marine-store dealer would be glad if the young gentleman and the young ladies would step into the room behind the shop.

They did so.

“Good day, young ladies,” said the marine-store dealer; “and you desire to see one of the refuse-holes of London, eh?” and he smiled expressively.

“Mr. Nettleford wished us to see it,” replied Mary, loftily, and looking round the room with a supercilious gaze.

“Oh, the young gentleman here,” and he looked towards his son.

“These young ladies,” said Henry Nettleford, “have been used to all the splendour of refined life and unlimited wealth. I have desired to show them some of its contrasts; will you allow them to see your rag-pickers’ room?”

“With the greatest pleasure,” replied the marine-store dealer, with difficulty restraining his curiosity with regard to the object of his son.

“Daniel!” he cried to the Hunchback, who had gone back into the shop.

“Will you conduct these young ladies and this young gentleman into the picking-room?” said the marine-store dealer to the Hunchback as soon as he appeared.

Daniel Targin again looked at Mary and then at Georgina with the same expression of ludicrous surprise which had raised Georgina’s merriment when they first saw him on entering the shop.

“Will you follow me?” he said, and led the way through the door in the corner of the room.

As they passed out of the room Henry Nettleford and the marine-store dealer exchanged a very expressive look.

The picking-room, as it was called, was a long, narrow work-room, with piles of rags on each side, and at each pile was seated a woman attired in rags little better than those upon which she was engaged, selecting different kinds of rags from each other. Mary looked down

upon them as she passed along between the two lines with an expression of scorn which was not all scorn.

"I do not care to see any more of this," she said, hastily. "I am sorry I came, Mr. Nettleford."

"We will immediately return," he said. "I merely wished you to glance at this strange interior. We will now re-join my wizard."

They found the marine-store dealer still seated in his room, but he rose as they re-entered.

"Your inspection has been but short," he said.

"It has been enough, I think," Henry Nettleford observed, significantly. He then turned to Mary Smugglefuss, who seemed to be bewildered between a feeling of indignation and of curiosity, and said—"You have seen this day an accumulation of the rags of the world. I wished to show them to you in order that you might practically see the changes that occur even in the glitter of the world."

"You might have wished it, Mr. Nettleford, but I think you might have ascertained if I had wished it also," said Mary, drawing herself up.

"Why, Mary," exclaimed Henry Nettleford, "I have, I am sure, intuitively consulted your wishes!"

"Indeed I do not know what you mean."

"Have I not been made—if not partaker—at least the depository of your golden dreams? Have you not, in the romantic atmosphere of your dreams, wandered with the magnanimous prince, who, in lowly garb, sought out his love and wooed her, and carried her to his brilliant palace in a golden land?"

Mary looks at her former lover with a gaze that expresses at once indignation and curiosity.

"In your imagination you have thought of me as that prince."

Mary indignantly tosses her head.

"I understand the gesture, but you have imagined me to be that prince; a bright reality, however, has dispelled that dream in which I appeared, and though I cannot wholly rejoice at that, still may I be permitted to congratulate you, and in order to prove to you how true that congratulation is, I wished to show a startling contrast in the palatial home of that prince that you idealized in me. Is this the palace home, Mary, which, if love could have fulfilled its prayers, you would have wished to realize?"

"What is the meaning of this, Mr. Nettleford?" inquired Mary, a little frightened.

"Behold, Mary, my palace home. You have seen the 'vassals and serfs' that would have been 'by your side,' if your early love had but fulfilled its prayers—this is my headsman," and he laid his hand upon the shoulder of the Hunchback as he said this.

"I really do not understand you, Mr. Nettleford; pray let us return home."

"I have returned home. Why, Mary, you are standing now in the home of my ancestors."

"What!" exclaimed the young lady, in a tone of indignation.

"Yes, Mary, you have been wooed and won—and here is the contrast that I wish to show you for your present gratification by the son of the rag-gatherer. Forgive me, father," he passionately cried, turning to the marine-store dealer; "you will applaud me by and by. Mary, behold the realization of a dream that is past."

"This your home!" cried Mary, shuddering.

"My home."

"The home that you would have brought me to?" exclaimed Mary, in a tone of horror.

"Am I not magnanimous, Mary, in showing you the home from which you have been saved?"

"It would have been more magnanimous, sir, if months ago you had refrained from imposing upon the family to which I belong," cried Mary, her eyes flashing with indignation.

"Where's the imposition?" demanded Henry Nettleford.

"As what did you appear before us in our house?" asked Mary.

"As I intend to leave you, Mary—as a gentleman."

Mary laughed scornfully and said—"The son of a rag-picker assuming to be such a character must be an impostor."

"Mary, Mary!" indignantly exclaimed her younger sister, "Mr. Nettleford has never deserved such an insult at your hands."

"You are a silly, homely creature, Georgina," cried Mary, in a tone of great excitement. "I believe you have no spirit in you."

"I trust that I shall never have that spirit which could wantonly insult another," said Georgina, quietly.

"Belonging to our family, you should

at least have the spirit to resent an insult offered to yourself," and Mary drew herself up to her full height.

"Mary, I fear that you have mistaken that which should be a lesson for an insult," said Georgina.

"Will you have the goodness to call our carriage, man?" and Mary addressed the Hunchback.

The Hunchback looked from Mary to her sister, then to Henry Nettleford, and lastly to the marine-store dealer, who had sat a silent witness of the scene that had just been enacted.

"I brought you here, Mary; I will be your conductor from this palace to your carriage. Come!" and as Henry Nettleford said this he opened the door that led into the shop; Mary followed him with a dignified step, with Georgina close behind her. When they emerged from the shop Henry offered his arm to Mary.

"Your position is behind, sir," she cried, indignantly, as she walked hastily towards the carriage.

Henry Nettleford smiled, and offered his arm to Georgina, who readily took it.

Mary flew into the carriage the moment it was opened; but Georgina allowed herself to be assisted into it by Henry Nettleford, and as he closed the door she bent upon him a look full of tenderness which indubitably indicated an ardent feeling—genuine, true, and womanly, and which, but that his soul had been so absorbed, Henry Nettleford might have discovered before that day.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE LITTLE OLD MAN AT TOWER HILL AGAIN.

HENRY NETTLEFORD walked slowly back across Tower Hill to the shop of the marine-store dealer, pondering upon the scene which he had just gone through, and he thought of that expressive look that Georgina had given him as they parted, and this made him wonder why he had never contrasted the characters of the two sisters before. He did so now, and it is scarcely necessary to add that it was greatly to the advantage of the younger sister. What was there about Mary, he thought, that had captivated him? He almost felt irritated as the suggestion occurred to him, that she was the more stylish in appearance of the two. No doubt upon a first interview Mary was well calculated to attract

more attention than Georgina, because she was slightly taller—she had an imperious carriage, she was exceedingly haughty, and, as every one admitted, she was very handsome. But Georgina was handsome also, and she was graceful, but she was neither haughty nor imperious in her bearing. Amiability was stamped upon her countenance; she was gentle and retiring, and she aimed not at that glittering light which attracts but to destroy. There was but little chance of her becoming a singed moth. Gaudy display had no charms for her, and she had never dreamt that she was dwelling in marble halls, and she had never sighed for vassals and serfs at her feet. In disposition she may be said to have been her sister's antithesis. And now the fact seemed to strike upon Henry Nettleford's mind as though it were a sudden discovery. In the sense that it had only just been made, why it was a sudden discovery; but Henry Nettleford felt that it should have been no new discovery at all, and he reasoned with himself that he ought to have seen it from the first.

The marine-store dealer met his son at the door of his shop, as the young man thus musing returned from the carriage which had carried away the two sisters.

"Come in, Harry," said the marine-store dealer, with an encouraging smile upon his face; "come in, for I want to know all about this—what shall I call it—romantic freak?"

"Whatever you may please to call it, father, you will, I know, applaud it."

"Applaud it, my boy, yes; for there is one object that you must have had in view, that I think I can plainly see."

"And what is that, father?"

"To humiliate haughty heartlessness, Harry, and it was well."

When they had reached the room behind the rag-shop, the marine-store dealer said—"Now sit down, Harry; I see you are a little agitated—sit down and calm yourself a little. I want to have a word or two with Daniel in the shop, and I will be back again in a minute or two."

And the marine-store dealer left Henry Nettleford to his meditations. The current of his thoughts was the same as previously. The contrast the characters of the two sisters had so unexpectedly presented came upon his mind perhaps more forcibly now that he was sitting in that room that Mary and Georgina had so recently left. But he was not permitted to indulge his meditations long,

for presently the marine-store dealer threw open the door with a bang, and entering the room hastily, exclaimed—

“Harry, here is a strange coincidence; scarcely have those two young ladies left, when who should arrive but—behold!”

And he ushered in the little old man from the almshouses down by Wandsworth.

“Targin, old man, I am sorry you did not come sooner; come in and sit down, old man—sit down,” and the marine-store dealer placed a chair for the little old man.

Before the old man sat down, however, he bowed respectfully to Henry Nettleford, and said, “Your most obedient, young Mr. Nettleford.”

“What a pity he was not here half an hour ago, Harry, isn’t it?” said the marine-store dealer to his son.

“How is that, Mr. Nettleford?” the little old man inquired.

“Why, will you believe it, Targin, that we have had Smugglefuss’s two daughters here,” exclaimed the marine-store dealer, merrily.

“Here, in this house—in this room—do you mean, Mr. Nettleford?” inquired the little old man, in a tone of incredulity.

“Here, in this room, Targin;” and the marine-store dealer laughed at the declaration as though he could scarcely believe in its truth himself.

The little old man looked, with a ludicrous expression upon his countenance, across at Harry Nettleford, and said—

“One of them young ladies must have been in love with your son, sir, indeed, to have come here. I honour them for it, sir—I honour them for it—the Smugglefuss’s blood isn’t all bad.”

“They didn’t come of their own free will, Targin; they were brought here,” said the marine-store dealer.

“Ah, indeed; how was that, sir?”

“Why, upon that point I am as much in the dark as yourself, Targin, and Harry, here, was just about to explain it to me.”

“Strange as the visit may appear, father, I have very little to explain, but what there is I will freely give you.”

“Before you do so I must call Daniel to come in and hear it, because I should tell you that he feels the deepest interest in all that concerns you, Harry.”

“And if he did not, Mr. Nettleford, I should think that he had some of the same kind of blood in him as the Smugglefusses—I mean the father and the mother, of

course”—and as the little old man said this he chuckled to himself as though he inwardly enjoyed what he was saying.

And so the Hunchback was called into the room.

“As you were a witness, Daniel, of the interesting scene that has so lately taken place in this room, I want you to hear all about it,” said the marine-store dealer.

There was an expression of perplexity on the countenance of the Hunchback as he looked first at the marine-store dealer, then at Henry Nettleford, and lastly, at the little old man, Targin. Ever since the last visit of the little old man to the marine-store dealer’s on Tower Hill the Hunchback had felt himself adrift, as it were, in the world, and when alone he was melancholy. People who were in the habit of meeting him said that old Nettleford’s managing Hunchback was getting more and more morose every day. They were mistaken. He was not so morose as formerly, but he was more reserved and more taciturn, and so the people with whom he was thrown in contact arrived at a false conclusion. He had always looked up to the little old man, who had married Sir Robert Smugglefuss’s aunt, as his father, and that he was the only relative he had in the world. When, therefore, the revelation was made to him that old Targin was not his father, he felt as though he had sustained a personal loss, and that he was without kith or kin in the world. If he had been what Gloster designates a marvellous proper man, such a revelation and such deprivation could not have failed to have made a marked impression, if he had been of impressionable stuff at all. But Hunchback, as he was, an object of derisive and ribald ridicule as he had always been, he felt his low social position far more acutely than the generality of persons placed in the same situation would have done. But even under these circumstances he was not wholly a prey to melancholy thoughts, because a new hope had been created within him. That hope was centred in Henry Nettleford.

“Now, Harry, tell us what this little bit of mystery is,” said the marine-store dealer.

“You have already, I fancy, seen the heart of it, father. You recollect the conversation we had in this room respecting the character and the antecedents of Sir Robert Smugglefuss?”

“I do, Harry, and so does old Targin here—eh, old man?” said the marine-store

dealer, playfully slapping the little old man on the shoulder; "and what of that, Harry?"

"You have seen her to-day, father, and I do not hesitate to say that I had set my heart there."

"Which one, Harry? there were two, you know."

"The proud—the imperious—the heartless one;" and Henry Nettleford spoke very bitterly.

"I see," said the marine-store dealer.

"And she favoured my pretensions—you have seen how beautiful she is—and I felt blessed indeed."

"In appearance she did seem worthy of you, Harry."

"She is as worthless as the veriest rag in the shop out there, father," said Henry Nettleford, in a tone of excitement which showed that the old feeling—it did seem old now—was not entirely eradicated from his heart. "She accepted my love and reciprocated it, at least her lips told me so. I flattered myself that she had given me her heart, and I have learnt that she is simply without a heart."

"Why, there is nothing strange or novel in all this, Harry," said the marine-store dealer, seriously.

"True; but those who suffer from it feel it not the less," and then Harry Nettleford, turning abruptly to the husband of Sir Robert Smugglefuss's aunt, said—"I much regret, sir, that you were not here half an hour ago, because your presence would have made my triumph complete."

"There is your mystery, Harry, which you have not explained to us," said the marine-store dealer.

"Father, she is heartlessly romantic," said Harry Nettleford, walking up and down the room, not exactly in agitation but as a kind of relief—it was so to him. "What she fancied me, I know not, but I did know that she could have no suspicion of my connexion here, but from the first I had intended to test her by it. Happily, however, for me, the course of events has rendered it wholly unnecessary for me to apply any such test. Inheritress of her father's spirit, which you know so well, she was thrown in contact with the glitter of romantic position and wealth, and she soared away from me upon the wing of ambition. You have seen how a certain Indian nabob has been fêted by the Sheriff of London?"

"Yes, all the world knows it, Harry," said the marine-store dealer.

"No, I don't," cried the little old man, Targin.

"A young nabob has visited London lately," said Henry Nettleford, addressing the little old man; "he seems in a kind of halo of glitter—his wealth is said to be fabulous; he is young; I must admit that he is handsome; he has been the guest of Sir Robert Smugglefuss, and now for the heart of my mystery, father, he will become his son-in-law ere long."

"Never!" shouted the little old man, jumping up in much excitement and giving the table before him an emphatic slap with his open hand.

"Eh, Targin—what! why?" cried the marine-store dealer.

"Because—"

But suddenly the little old man stopped, as though he were struck with some new thought.

"Because what, Targin?"

"Excuse me, Mr. Nettleford," he said in quite a chuckling tone; "excuse me, sir. Ha, ha, ha! Daniel, boy, I was almost letting out the secret too soon. Go on, young gentleman," he said to Henry Nettleford, "you have not completed your story, sir."

"I have little more to add," the young man said: "she humiliated me, and on the instant I conceived the resolution of humiliating her."

"How, Harry?" inquired the marine-store dealer.

"By bringing her here, and by the scene that you have witnessed to-day."

"In which, Harry, did it not strike you that you were also humiliating yourself, boy?" the marine-store dealer said.

"I think not—it might appear so and probably would be so, but not with a being like Mary Smugglefuss. The scene of to-day will rankle in her heart, and it cannot harm her in any way. It may be that I have done her good service in spite of herself, because in days to come the recollection of the scene of this day may have a salutary influence upon her mind."

"Let her marry him! let her marry him!" cried the little old man, as though he were reasoning with himself. "Why, now I come to think of it, it will be all the better. My legacy," and as he said this he chuckled to himself as though he were enjoying some good joke—"my legacy will be all the more substantial if you should have to administer to it, Daniel."

The Hunchback had as yet made no observation touching the subject-matter

in hand, but at this point he turned to Henry Nettleford, and said—

"You have not, sir, told us anything about the other young lady. I observed her very closely, more than I did the other one."

"And what did you think of her?" Henry Nettleford inquired.

"Shall I tell you my thoughts, sir?"

"Do; I asked you for it."

"That she looked upon you as you had looked upon her sister."

"Why, how do you mean?"

"I am not skilled in these matters," said the Hunchback, with a meaning smile, "but I fancy that if your choice had fallen upon the other sister, there would have been no such scene as that which we have had to witness in this room to-day."

"Strange," thought Henry, "that such a thought should have struck him too."

"And these are the two sisters, are they? the two daughters of Robert and Mary Smugglefuss, eh?" said the uncle by marriage of Sir Robert Smugglefuss. "Oh, I wish I had been here to see them. Why did you not let me know that they were coming? Oh, how I should like to have met them!"

"I wish you had, indeed I do," answered Henry Nettleford.

"But I haven't been told what the scene was to-day," said the old man, smiling.

The Hunchback briefly explained it to him.

"Oh, she is evidently a girl worthy of her father," said the little old man, curling his mouth as he spoke, in order to give the necessary ironical emphasis to his observation. "Which daughter do you mean, Henry Nettleford? Why, the grand one, the high and haughty one, the one with the true Smugglefuss blood;" and the little old man rolled the words about in his mouth as though he were cracking them with his teeth. "And you think she will marry the nabob, do you?" he inquired of Henry Nettleford.

"There is no doubt of it, if it depends upon her own will and action," replied the young man, bitterly.

"Well, let her; I shall in that case have the more reason to remember her in my will;" and the little old man cracked the joints of his hands and chuckled as he said this. "And it is your opinion, is it, Daniel, that the other young lady would

have been more worthy of young Mr. Nettleford?" the old man inquired of his adopted son.

"I am convinced, little as I saw of her, that the two sisters are as different in character and disposition as they can possibly be," said the Hunchback.

"And what is your opinion, sir?" the little old man inquired of Henry Nettleford.

"Why, that our friend here has formed a just estimate or judgment of the characters of the two sisters; and it is a matter of astonishment to me that I never before myself discovered the difference between them," said Henry Nettleford, abstractedly.

"You will observe them, I dare say, more closely the next time you meet," the little old man observed.

"The next time we meet!" ejaculated Henry Nettleford. "We shall never meet again."

"Oh, I hope you will," exclaimed the little old man.

"You do! why?" asked Henry Nettleford, smiling.

"Because if, as Daniel says, the one sister is so opposite to the other—so unlike the Smugglefusses—she will be worthy of the son of my dear friend here, Mr. Nettleford;" and the little old man spoke very seriously indeed, as he walked across to the marine-store dealer.

And Henry Nettleford is serious too, for he is thinking of that expressive look with which he was favoured as the carriage of Sir Robert Smugglefuss drove away from Tower Hill not half an hour before.

"I know what you are thinking, young gentleman," said the little old man, archly, to Henry Nettleford; "yes, I know."

"Do you?" said Henry Nettleford, smiling. "What?"

"You are thinking that after the scene of to-day, you will not be able to venture down to Gauges Hall again, eh?"

"Certainly; if that was not the current of my thoughts at the moment, such is undoubtedly my opinion," said Henry Nettleford.

"And why?"

"And why?" he exclaimed. "Having suffered one humiliation, do you think it probable that I should seek another in the same quarter?"

"What, from Smugglefuss and his wife, do you mean?" asked old Targin, with a meaning smile.

CHAPTER XXII.

MARY, GEORGINA, AND ROBERT SMUGGLEFUSS.

"Well—Sir Robert Smugglefuss—yes, although I confess I did not think of him for the moment," said Henry Nettleford.

"You need fear no humiliation from him, young gentleman," said Targin.

"Why do you think so?"

"Do you think that that high-flying daughter of his—I mean the one you have escaped from—will tell him of what has occurred here to-day?—not she."

This had not struck Henry Nettleford; but now that it was suggested to him, he thought it was likely enough, and he quite brightened up under the influence of the thought.

"And do you think the other is likely to say anything about it?" And the little old man smiled knowingly at the notion, and he looked across at the marine-store dealer expressively, and then he turned to the Hunchback, and addressing him, said—"Now, Daniel, listen to me; I have got something serious to say to you. You have seen Smugglefuss's daughters here to-day?"

The Hunchback nodded.

"Now, mind you, if ever it should be necessary—I don't say as it will, but if it should be when you see more of 'em, as you are very likely to do—if it should ever be necessary to befriend that young daughter of the Smugglefusses, promise me you'll do it—do you hear?" and the little old man spoke emphatically.

There was a smile of incredulity upon the Hunchback's countenance as he replied—"It isn't very likely that I shall ever be thrown in contact with any of them again."

"Don't be too sure of that, boy," said the little old man, sharply. "Wait till you receive my legacy, boy—wait till you receive my legacy."

"Why, there is *your* mystery, Targin, again," said the marine-store dealer.

"What does it mean?"

"Well, Mr. Nettleford, it means this"—and the little old man looked as though he were going to make his revelation, and such, indeed, would seem to have been his intention, but he suddenly stopped, and then added—"But no, Mr. Nettleford, I'll tell it you all when this grand marriage has taken place; that will be the time—that will be the time." And then, after a pause, he added to his foster-son, "And mind, Daniel, that you always remember your promise."

THE two sisters drove away from Tower Hill rapidly—such being the instructions of Mary to the coachman—that is, they drove as rapidly as the obstruction of Tower Street and London Bridge and the Borough would admit. And the two sisters were taciturn as they drove home. Mary was too indignant to offer an observation upon the scene they had just passed through, and Georgina probably felt too timid to do so. At all events, they were both silent, and when they arrived at Ganges Hall they each proceeded to her own room, and there indulged in reflections which it is not my purpose at this moment to follow.

It so happened, and this was fortunate perhaps, that Lady Smugglefuss was from home that afternoon. She was out with Mrs. Bulkinsfuddle making calls in Clapham Park, and doing the high and mighty generally in the neighbourhood. Young Robert Smugglefuss, however, was at home that day, as he had various important matters to settle in connexion with the temporarily amalgamated corps of the Streatham, Clapham Park, and Tooting volunteers. A meeting was that evening to be held to take into consideration the propriety of consolidating the three corps into one permanent body, and of agreeing to a memorial, or of considering a memorial to be presented to Sir Robert Smugglefuss, intimating to that august personage that if he would condescend to take upon himself the office of colonel of the regiment so formed, the memorialists, "as in duty bound, would ever pray, etc."

As both Mary and Georgina were aware that these important matters were under consideration, and that their brother Robert was away from business in consequence, they were not at all surprised on descending to the dining-room at finding the young man there.

"Well, everything is going on very jolly," he said to his sisters, gaily; "there's no doubt that the fellows will agree to the address to be presented to papa, and after that I intend to make a special proposition myself."

"What is it that it is proposed that papa should be?" inquired Mary, loftily.

"Colonel of the combined corps," replied Robert Smugglefuss, standing up as though he were on parade.

"Is that higher or lower than a general?" Mary asked.

Young Robert Smugglefuss was unable on the instant to answer the question, and he had to consider, and having considered, it struck him that he did not exactly know which was the higher rank of the two, and so he returned a rather indefinite answer, by saying, "Well, you see, Mary, I believe a colonel may be a general, but whether a general's a colonel I don't know."

"Which sounds the best?" inquired Mary, as though she were called upon there and then to make the election.

"Well, I suppose that's a matter of opinion," Mr. Robert Smugglefuss replied. "For my part I think 'colonel' is much more aristocratic and nobby."

"I don't," said Mary, with decision, "and I think before you decide on the address to papa, you ought to ascertain which is the higher grade of the two, and then ask him to accept the higher one."

"Perhaps I'd better ask the sergeant," suggested Robert; "he'll know, of course."

"I think you had better," said Mary.

"Ah, but I shan't be able to see him before to-night; he's just gone," said Robert, in a tone of slight dismay.

"Well, have you no means of ascertaining yourself?" asked Mary.

"Dictionary?" suggested Robert, inquiringly.

"Yes, I should think that will tell you."

So the dictionary was referred to, but Robert turning to the word "General," he was observed by the two sisters to pull rather a long countenance, and then he turned to the noun substantive "Colonel," and having mastered its signification, he said, "I think it must be 'colonel,' Mary."

From the expression upon Robert's countenance, Mary could see that "general" was much the higher rank of the two; such had been her impression indeed from the first; and so she said, without waiting for her brother's explanation, "I think it ought to be 'general.'"

"Well, you see, 'general' means the commander of an army or a brigade, and we are not an army, you know," said Robert, seriously; "we are not even a brigade."

"But I think an officer can be a general without having an army to command," Mary said.

Robert Smugglefuss couldn't say any-

thing about that, but it was quite plain, he said, that the commander of a regiment was the colonel.

"Colonel Sir Robert Smugglefuss—General Sir Robert Smugglefuss," Mary repeated to herself in order to test which sounded the more aristocratic, and then she said—"Well, I think 'colonel' sounds very well, and now I remember, Sir Charles Phipps, he is colonel; yes, it must be 'colonel,' Robert, there is no doubt of it. Then of course papa will be called Colonel Sir Robert Smugglefuss at once," she said, with much animation.

"Immediately upon his taking the command, of course," replied young Smugglefuss.

"And what is the proposition that you say you are going to make after the memorial is agreed to?" Mary inquired.

"Well, now it's all off between you," replied young Smugglefuss, laughing, "you won't care much about it."

There is a deep frown upon Mary's countenance, for she knows well enough that her brother is going to allude to Henry Nettleford.

"I say, Mary," said her brother, grinning, "how jolly rich this Indian nabob is! why, they say in the City he's got nearly five thousand a week: only think of that! Lord, what a swell you'll be!"

Mary was considerably mollified by this allusion, and she smiled graciously upon her brother as from a throne upon some flattering courtier.

"You were going to tell us of some proposition that you intend making to the corps, Robert," said Georgina, who had not previously spoken, and who, equally well with her sister, knew that Robert's previous allusion had reference to Henry Nettleford.

"Why, I'm going to propose that we should have an ensign to our united regiment, as soon as papa has accepted the colonelcy, and then I shall present the flag to the regiment."

"A very good idea, Robert, very good indeed," said Mary, patronisingly.

"Yes, and to make matters a little bit square again, I intend to ask Henry Nettleford to be the ensign, and then we'll have a grand field-day again, and you and the nabob shall present the colours to the regiment. There, now, don't you think that would be out and out jolly, eh?"

Judging from the expression on her countenance at this intimation he might

have inferred that in Mary's mind the proposition was anything but jolly.

"Do you happen to know who this Nettleford is?" she inquired in a most solemn voice.

"This Nettleford," thought young Smugglefuss, "to speak of him in that way, only think;" and he set about thinking upon the subject, for he said nothing.

"Do you know who and what he is?" Mary again demanded, and more imperiously than before.

"I know he's a jolly good fellow," said young Smugglefuss. "What do you mean?"

"And so are the people who congregate down at the pothouse in the village jolly good fellows, I suppose," said Mary, tossing her head.

"I daresay they are, but then Harry Nettleford doesn't go to the pothouse down in the village," said Robert.

"Do you know who and what he is, I again ask?" cried Mary at the top of her voice.

"How do you mean, Mary, who and what he is? He's a gentleman, isn't he?"

"No," almost shrieked Mary, rising to her feet, for she had been seated previously.

"No," echoed Robert in an equally excited tone; "then I say he is, whoever says to the contrary. Come now."

"Again I ask you, Robert, do you know who he is?" demanded Mary, her face flushed with passionate excitement.

"I know that he was my schoolmate at Eton, and as good a friend as ever I had."

"Do you know who his connexions are?"

"No: what do I care about his connexions? he never had any, as I understand," said Robert Smugglefuss.

"Never before the world, that I can readily understand, but connexions he has," cried Mary, in the same tone of excitement as before.

But this tone of excitement was not altogether natural. It was not that legitimate excitement which springs from generous feeling, or a strong belief in that which is right. Nay, it was to a certain extent assumed and forced, by which perhaps Mary Smugglefuss was seeking to impose upon herself. The feeling with which she had once, and at no very distant date, looked upon Henry Nettleford had not been altogether crushed out of her soul. It would occasionally rise in her breast like a portion of her con-

science, and so, now that she had thought over the matter a little, she experienced something like satisfaction in the occurrence of that day. In it she found a kind of justification to her own heart for the manner in which she had treated her quondam lover.

"Well, and what are his connexions, as you seem to know?" inquired Robert.

"He has himself to-day introduced them to us," cried Mary.

"The deuce he has!" said Robert, his tone of resistant remonstrance giving place to one of curiosity. "What, brought them down here?"

"No, he has taken us to them."

"Us? whom do you mean by us?"

"Georgina and myself."

"Well, and who are they, and what are they?"

"Rag pickers and bone grubbers," exclaimed Mary, her eyes glistening with real or simulated passion.

"What?" shouted Robert Smugglefuss, and then he burst into a loud laugh.

"You may laugh, Robert, but what I tell you is the truth," cried Mary, stamping her foot.

"They must have picked up a fine lot of rags and bones for them to have kept him in the style he lived in at Eton, and to keep him in the style he is now living in, in the Temple," said Robert.

"I think you might have been a little more circumspect before you had introduced such a class of persons into this house," said Mary, with much dignity.

"Oh indeed!" returned her brother, in a sneering tone. "I wonder your wonderful nose did not discover what sort of connexions Harry Nettleford had the moment you saw him."

"You cannot always judge of persons by their appearance," retorted Mary.

"And I dare say Harry Nettleford will be inclined to say that you cannot always judge of persons even by their words and actions;" and Robert Smugglefuss nodded at Georgina, as much as to say, "I think I had her there, eh?"

"Oh, of course I know what you mean, and it is quite clear that I cannot look for any sympathy in the shape of congratulation for having had such a narrow escape;" and as Mary said this, she drew herself loftily up, as though she were already the wife of Darshan Typos Ghurr.

"I don't care whether you marry the nabob or not," said Robert, decidedly. "You'll never get a better fellow than

Harry Nettleford—never mind the rags and bones.”

Mary seemed to shudder at the bare mention of those commodities.

“But I should like to know what you mean by rags and bones,” demanded Robert, sternly.

“I mean this,” replied Mary, “that his father keeps a rag and bone shop on Tower Hill.”

“Who told you so?” Robert asked.

“He himself introduced us to-day to his honoured father, in his father’s shop—rag and bone shop on Tower Hill,” said Mary with mock solemnity, and then she added with biting sarcasm, “Perhaps you would like to see the announcement made to-morrow in all the papers: yesterday the two daughters of Sir Robert and Lady Smugglefuss paid a visit to the rag shop on Tower Hill;” and then turning fiercely upon her brother, she cried, grinding her teeth as she did so, “Why, it makes my blood boil to think of it.”

“You needn’t think of it; there’ll be no such announcement in the papers,” said Robert, taking his sister’s allusion literally.

“I mean it makes one’s blood boil, Robert, to think that you should have introduced such people here.”

“Harry Nettleford is fit to be introduced anywhere,” said Robert, stoutly.

“And his rag-picking father too, I suppose,” said Mary, frigidly.

“I don’t know his father, but if he is anything like his son I shall be very glad to know him, I can tell you,” said Robert, with much determination. “What do you say, Georgina?”

“I think Mr. Nettleford is a gentleman, as you say, Robert,” replied Georgina, quietly, and with just the smallest indication of a blush upon her cheek.

“Oh yes, you indeed!” cried Mary, referring to her sister: “even while we were in the rubbish hole itself to-day, with all those horrid filthy rags around us,”—and Mary curled her lip in disgust, —“you could talk sentiment, and tried to screen the person who had put such an indignity upon all of us.”

“I merely did a simple act of justice, Mary,” Georgina quietly observed.

“What, to me and to papa and mamma, and to our position?” and Mary laughed, mockingly.

“No, to Mr. Nettleford,” said Georgina, in the same quiet tone as previously.

“Dear me, what lofty magnanimity!

hadn’t you better aspire yourself, Georgina dear, to the son of a rag gatherer?” suggested Mary, in a tone which she intended as a withering sarcasm.

“Well, now you come to say that, Mary, I am sorry that Harry Nettleford didn’t take a fancy to Georgina instead of you—upon my word I am,” said Robert.

“Then in that case, I suppose, some of the family would have gone to rags,” and Mary merrily laughed at what she considered her sarcastic wit.

“Well, I shall think none the worse of Harry Nettleford, even though he be the son of a rag picker,” said Robert, “and I shall still ask him to be our ensign, whether you present the colours or not.”

Why, there are tears in Georgina’s eyes, as she looks at her brother, and now they are coursing down her cheeks, but she smiles as she brushes them off, for she is delighted to find that her brother Robert will not abandon his old schoolmate. Oh, she could bless her brother for his warm-heartedness and magnanimity. Why, Georgina, large-hearted little girl, you will have opportunities yet of seeing Henry Nettleford. Those are pleasant tears—let them flow on.

Probably they would have flowed on, had not the discussion been interrupted by the announcement that Sir Robert Smugglefuss had arrived from the City with the nabob, Darsham Typos Ghurr, and that they were then in the drawing-room.

Mary rushed from the room for the purpose of adornment, and subsequently Robert had an opportunity of hearing from Georgina the particulars of the strange visit that the two sisters had paid to Tower Hill. Young Smugglefuss promised Georgina that he would go and see Harry Nettleford the very next morning.

Long before she reached the drawing-room all traces of Mary’s agitation and excitement had vanished. Her princely lover in his glittering robes was at her feet, and speaking of the glorious future that was immediately about to open to her.

And from that day forth until the nuptial day the nabob came down each evening to Ganges Hall, and was an ardent lover truly.

Sir Robert Smugglefuss in solemn seriousness told all his friends in the City that he never could make out by what means the announcement got into all the

papers that a marriage had been arranged between the nabob, Darsham Typos Ghurr, and the eldest daughter of Sir Robert Smugglefuss.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE SPLENDID MARRIAGE.

THE marriage of a daughter of a British merchant prince to an Asiatic nabob is not an event of frequent occurrence. Nabobs are not at all common characters in England, and although they may be plentiful enough in India, even there a marriage by one of them with an English girl would be not only a most uncommon occurrence, but something very like an impossibility. As a strange event, therefore, the Streathamites seemed to be determined to give it welcome in the case of the daughter of Sir Robert Smugglefuss. The occasion was made a gala-day, and although many had been the splendid triumphs in the matter of display that Ganges Hall had made since it had been in the occupation of its present tenant, it had never come up to the magnificence which it exhibited on the occasion of the marriage of the nabob, Darsham Typos Ghurr, with the elder daughter of Sir Robert Smugglefuss, citizen and fishmonger, and sheriff of London. The denizens of Streatham, especially the small householders and the cottagers, appeared to have been seized with a sudden desire to do honour to the great ceremony of which Ganges Hall was the centre. For every house and cottage displayed its flags and coloured calico and wreaths of evergreens, and all that sort of thing, and in such profusion too that it really looked like lavish extravagance on the part of those poor people in the small houses and the cottages, and it must have been inferred by any stranger who happened to be a witness of this display, that Sir Robert Smugglefuss and his family must be highly popular in their own neighbourhood to call forth such a spontaneous adulation of general rejoicing. On the occasion of the auspicious event there were, it is true, carping, envious, detracting people in Clapham Park and at Tooting, ay, and even in Streatham itself, who said that, for a fortnight past, Mrs. Bulkinfuddle had been engaged in purchasing the flags and the coloured calico and the evergreens, and in distributing them to the cottagers and small householders, together with *largesse*; but this fact—and it was

an indisputable fact—only served to show the envy, and if not the hatred, the uncharitableness of the people, who sneeringly referred to it because out of their mouths was it proved that the poor cottagers and small householders had very good and substantial reason for the outward sign of rejoicing which they exhibited.

Mrs. Bulkinfuddle had been most indefatigable in her exertions to give due splendour to the occasion. Not only had she purchased all the coloured calico and evergreens, and superintended their distribution at the houses where they were to be displayed, but she had also superintended the cutting out and making up of the flags and the construction of the artificial flowers and rosettes with which the evergreens were adorned, but she had also specially engaged a gardener of acknowledged taste in laying out grounds, either by the week, month, or job, to suit the means and convenience of his patrons, who, for a whole week at Mrs. Bulkinfuddle's house, had been engaged in constructing artificial bouquets out of turnips and carrots and cabbages for the adornment of some of the flags that were to be displayed on the line of route of the nuptial *cortège*. Why, for the time, Mrs. Bulkinfuddle's house was turned into a workshop.

Nor did Mrs. Bulkinfuddle's great services for the occasion stop there. Besides purchasing the calico and greens, and having them made up, besides distributing them generously to those who had to display them, besides engaging the gardener—by the job—she had also organized a band of little girls, who were all to be dressed in white muslin sprinkled with artificial roses and with wreaths of lilies upon their heads. And it was in this selection that Mrs. Bulkinfuddle's good taste shone the most conspicuously. She inspected and selected all the little girls herself, a task which required much discrimination and judgment. There were to be twenty little girls, and in talking this part of the programme over with Lady Smugglefuss, Mrs. Bulkinfuddle said it was an essential point that all the little girls should be interesting looking, not only in their attire, which of course would be amply provided for, but in their countenance.

Lady Smugglefuss supposed that her dear friend meant that the little things should not be too plump, or display too much cheek.

Exactly. And not too high in colour; very fat red cheeks were to be rejected as rigidly as freckles and red hair.

Now it so happened that amongst the cottage female juvenile population of Streatham, which is acknowledged to be a most salubrious and healthy locality, there was at this time what may be called a run upon red faces and plump cheeks. Mrs. Bulkinfuddle had therefore no ordinary difficulty and trouble in selecting the required score of female juveniles, and even when the selection had been made, two of them had a strong tendency to warmth of colouring towards the head, and one exhibited an unmistakable obliquity of vision, which, however, was compensated, in Mrs. Bulkinfuddle's view, by an interesting pallor over her whole countenance.

The selection of this female band having been completed, much trouble still devolved upon Mrs. Bulkinfuddle in respect to them, seeing that they had to be drilled a little for the functions which they were required to perform in connexion with the ceremony, by which it was intended that Mary, elder daughter of Sir Robert Smugglefuss, knight, and the nabob Darsham Typos Ghurr should be made one. It is true that the duty they had to perform was simple enough; still, as the female juvenile mind is erratic and unsteady, it was necessary, in order to guard against any possible *contretemps*, that the whole of the twenty should undergo a course of practical instruction in what they were to do, which was to stand on each side of the avenue leading to the church, and as the bridal procession entered and emerged, to strew flowers upon the path of the bride and bridegroom.

It had been originally intended when Mrs. Bulkinfuddle conceived this interesting idea, that the little girls should, at the same time, sing a kind of bridal chorus, but this was found to be impracticable, as it was discovered that there was a total want of vocal unanimity in the band, which would have necessitated a long course of instruction to supply. The notion of the bridal chorus was therefore abandoned—not, it is true, without regret, but still it was felt that a very great triumph had been achieved in the organization of the twenty little girls, the construction of their white muslin dresses, and the supply of lily wreaths for their heads, to say nothing of the sagacious manner in which Mrs. Bulkin-

fuddle had succeeded in winning over commercial-minded mothers of some of the best-looking of the little girls, who in the end found her process of argument quite irresistible.

The three united corps of Streatham, Tooting, and Clapham Park rifle volunteers had, of course, in honour of their newly-elected colonel, volunteered to supply the military element to the grand display of the bridal morning, and the arrangement made by them was that they should form a guard of honour on each side of the avenue leading to Ganges Hall, and that in the evening they should dine together in a tent on the lawn, the banquet to be provided by their colonel.

Of course this was an arrangement into which they one and all readily entered.

As Sir Robert Smugglefuss was the great man of the parish, the old church, in honour of the occasion, was gaily dight, and from the picturesque old steeple floated that memorable flag—not the one we generally hear of in connexion with the battle and the breeze, but that noble flag which, on the occasion of the volunteer review in front of Ganges Hall, waved its ample folds above that splendid pile—that flag whose device combined the Union Jack and national standard with the star of India.

The grounds round Ganges Hall were a perfect coruscation of coloured calico and bunting. Although the elms were so numerous, and the deciduous shrubs were so thickly planted in those extensive grounds, yet every tree and shrub was festooned with the red, white, and blue, and true lovers' knots were entwined with every plant.

As that ubiquitous and mighty personage, the fashionable reporter, had already announced to the universe, the approaching nuptials of the elegant and wealthy nabob, Darsham Typos Ghurr, with the fascinating, accomplished, and elegant daughter of Sir Robert Smugglefuss, were to be on a scale of grandeur and magnificence never previously seen in an English county, and but rarely paralleled even in the gorgeous East itself. The fashionable reporter had been eloquent upon it for a week previously, and perhaps no stronger evidence of the gorgeous splendour of the bridal scene that was to be enacted at Streatham could be suggested than the fervent exclamations of the fashionable reporter

himself, who when seeking information at the Mansion House on the subject, on being informed that the nabob had publicly shaken hands with the sheriff, saying "the grip of friendship of your future son-in-law," exclaimed ecstatically and with the deepest emotion—

"Dear me, how nice!"

The fashionable reporter has his sensitive feelings; they are not wholly blunted by the splendour in which he habitually moves.

A great house in the City had contracted for the wedding *déjeuner*, the subsequent banquet to the regiment commanded by Sir Robert Smugglefuss, and for the assembly in the evening at Ganges Hall. The order that was issued by Sir Robert Smugglefuss was as comprehensive, as brief, and emphatic as words could make it. It was simply—"spare no expense, let everything be splendid."

And Sir Robert Smugglefuss had been most liberal in his invitations too. There was not a wealthy member of the Common Council who had not been invited, in addition to the Lord Mayor, and Court of Aldermen, and every civic functionary above one thousand a year.

Surely the right worshipful sheriff had enough upon his mind in all this, nor can he be reasonably open to censure if, in the greatness of the preparations he had made, he had for the moment forgotten those who might under other circumstances have been uppermost in his thoughts. His immediate family connexions were not extensive. It was believed that there were a few still left down in that remote town not far away from the Land's End. It was believed too that they had not been fortunate like their near relative. Nay, it was known that at least two of them were in that noble refuge which the nation generously provides for its obscure poverty, which, probably for its prison-like strength, is called the union. They were old and destitute, but for more than forty years the Sheriff of London had forgotten them, and was it reasonable to expect that he should remember them now? Why, there were those who were much closer to him than the old connexions down in Cornwall, and even they were forgotten in the brilliant bustle of the approaching union. The little old man in the almshouse down Wandsworth way, he might have been, but he certainly was not, remembered. Why should he have been? Why should Sir Robert Smugglefuss,

Knight and Sheriff of London, make known to all the world that his nearest relative was living upon charity and in an almshouse? The idea, if it could have been entertained for a moment, would have been held to be preposterous, and so it was.

Why, somebody had even gone so far as to suggest to Mrs. Bulkinfuddle—I think it was the churchwarden of the parish who did so—that it would be a good opportunity for the sheriff to do a most graceful and beneficent act. There was a parochial school in the village, at which nearly all the poor children of the district attended; it was languishing for want of funds; there was a fear indeed that the grant would be withdrawn unless further local aid were afforded; now the necessary assistance would be as nothing out of the wealth of Sir Robert Smugglefuss.

Mrs. Bulkinfuddle had whisperingly conveyed this suggestion to the proper quarter, and the answer was that the patriotic man never interfered with matters which the state should wholly take under its control, the patriotic man never looked at matters of state in a parochial spirit, and therefore Sir Robert Smugglefuss thought the suggestion of the churchwarden most inappropriate and ill-timed.

Mrs. Bulkinfuddle received the intimation with becoming acquiescence, and went gaily off to buy six more pieces of crimson glazed calico.

As to the bride's trousseau, that was not only the admiration but the wonder of all Streatham, both to those who had had the privilege of seeing it and those who had not, for those who had seen it spoke in such glowing terms of the sight that they drove those who had not seen it almost crazy by a variety of feelings. But if the wedding dress of the bride was splendid, what shall be said of the presents that were made to her by the nabob himself? Why, they were indeed worthy not only of the nabob himself, but of Ganges Hall and the Smugglefuss family, and so thought the fortunate jeweller who had been entrusted with the commission, for he had exhibited them in his window for many days to the admiring gaze of an enthusiastic public, thereby at once administering to his own fame and the great glory of Sir Robert Smugglefuss.

And when the jewels that formed the wedding presents to the bride came home

the day before the wedding, they were arranged upon a table cover of purple velvet in one of the drawing-rooms for the wonder and delectation of the invited guests, some of whom, at the special intercession of Mrs. Bulkinfuddle, were admitted on the previous evening to a private view by gaslight.

The morning of the bridal day dawned brightly, and gave goodly token of an exceedingly fine day; and so it turned out to be, for the time was June, and the brightest flowers of the summer time were in full bloom in all the gay parterres at Ganges Hall.

The whole establishment was astir betimes, and long before the usual hour of breakfast the grand and pretty bride was surrounded by her tiring women; for, even before the altar vow had made her in reality a princess, she was determined to show herself worthy of that exalted rank. And so her dressing-room was very speedily a labyrinth of confusion, into which, I suppose, I must not attempt to intrude.

It was quite ten o'clock before the bride and her father and mother were ready to be presented to the assembled bridesmaids and Mrs. Bulkinfuddle, who were waiting to receive them. Sir Robert and Lady Smugglefuss entered the room first, the knight with his chain of office round his neck meandering over his white waistcoat, and Lady Smugglefuss in a purple velvet dress, the train whereof was of vast extent, and a head-dress which was a combination of the turban, the wreath, and the ordinary cap, and out of which projected three ostrich feathers. Immediately behind them came the bride, her train borne by the principal tiring woman, who carried it in her arms like a bundle, so extensive and bulky was it. She did it, however, artistically, and without producing any detrimental creases.

Mary Smugglefuss had practised before the glass the curtsy she should make on entering the room, and so the twelve bridesmaids were quite charmed by the deportment which she exhibited when she greeted them. There were mingled feelings, however, agitating the bosoms of that beautiful dozen. Some sighed with envy at the brilliant prospect that was opening before Mary Smugglefuss, and thought to themselves "what luck some girls have;" others sighed, and thought how much they would like to have some of those jewels; and one and all sighed and hoped that their wedding would be as

grand, although the bridegroom might not be an Eastern prince, as this of Mary Smugglefuss's was.

With a glow of thrilling pride on her countenance, the bride advances into the room, and bows with as much dignity as though she were about to ascend a throne and issue an order to the assembled beauties to be seated. And now that the bride is there, and Sir Robert and Lady Smugglefuss and young Smugglefuss and Georgina, who have come in after the bride, and the bridesmaids are all there, to say nothing of Mrs. Bulkinfuddle, it is well that the room is a large one, for that accumulation of light and fleecy attire, more flowing and expansive even than usual, quite fills it, and but that the material of those bewitching dresses is as light and airy as though the young ladies were attired for some gorgeous Eastern ballet scene, one might almost fear that the bride would be overwhelmed as by an avalanche, as those twelve bright hours in muslin throng about her to offer her their congratulations in anticipation. At this moment it is, indeed, a most charming picture that that room presents. In the centre is the brilliant bride herself, surrounded as by a substantial halo by the twelve bridesmaids; on the one side are the four French windows leading out into the beautiful flower-garden on that side of the house; and on the side of the room on which the fireplace is situated, Sir Robert Smugglefuss, Lady Smugglefuss, and Mrs. Bulkinfuddle are ranged like a rich background in dark and warm relief to the lightness and elegance of the rest of the picture.

The carriages are waiting at the door, and no less than eight are required, six for the bridesmaids, and the two state carriages of the sheriff for Sir Robert and his lady and the bride and young Smugglefuss and Mrs. Bulkinfuddle.

Sir Robert would have much liked to have had the bear-skin hat, the sword, the mace, and the Lord Mayor's State carriage in the procession, but after a consultation with the Right Honourable Tombola himself, it was discovered, by the aid of the Remembrancer—who of course ought to know everything about precedent connected with City matters, or what is he a Remembrancer for?—it was discovered that there was no precedent for such a proceeding. Not but what the Right Honourable Tombola, in the fervour of friendship and with a lively recollection of

the glowing banquet at Ganges Hall, was quite ready to create a precedent—there could be no stronger proof of his friendship—provided that the sheriff could show that he was justified in doing it by Magna Charta and the powers of the Thames Conservancy.

The magnanimous offer, however, was not carried out, but the wedding *cortège* from Ganges Hall to the church was quite grand enough as it was.

And all round the church was a scene of gay excitement and bustle, for long before the bride's procession set out from Ganges Hall the friends of the family and the general inhabitants of the district began to arrive at the sacred edifice, which was surrounded by a brilliant assortment of carriages and a miscellaneous gathering of sight-seers.

Every seat in the church was occupied before eleven o'clock, by which time they would have been at a considerable premium if there had been any to be had. Indeed, if a fashionable ecclesiastical railer had been about to fulminate the direst anathemas against the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, that old church could not have contained a more brilliant or glitteringly attired assembly.

Those who were contented with the sight of the great event of the day from the outside of the church, were gratified with a prolonged view of the dusky bridegroom himself, for he arrived in an open barouche, with two friends, and he stood at the entrance of the church awaiting the advent of his bride.

He was attired in more gorgeous splendour than he had ever previously exhibited. It was perhaps not quite so glittering with regard to colours—they were a little subdued, as indicative perhaps of his sense of the solemnity of the ordeal through which he was about to pass, but in richness of material and in costliness of ornamentation he had outdone even himself. His costume on this memorable occasion presented more of the military than the civil character, for he wore a kind of frock-coat made of green cloth, braided upon the breast and round the edges, and everywhere where braid could be tastefully placed; this trimming being of sterling gold. The buttons thereof were glittering diamonds. Upon his head he wore something between a turban and a hussar cap, but what was the fabric of the foundation thereof, it was impossible, by merely looking at it, to say; for the whole, except where the black feather

rose in the centre, was so thickly studded with jewels rare of various kinds that it looked like a substantial piece chipped off the walls of the cave of Adullum. His caftan was of rich yellow silk, and by his side he wore a scimitar, the handle and the scabbard of which were so thickly bejewelled over that they also looked like a galaxy of stars. He was, indeed, the cynosure of those staring eyes that gazed upon him from the crowded road outside of Streatham church; and many there were who thus gazed upon him who thought they had seldom seen a handsomer man, or one with a more noble presence; and everybody in the crowd—the one inside and the other outside of the church—was of opinion that both Sir Robert Smugglefuss and his daughter were lucky folks indeed.

The church is full—the two roads contiguous to the church are full of carriages and people anxiously awaiting, when the head of the bride's *cortège* is observed at the top of the hill, just winding round the trees there.

There is a buzz of suppressed admiration as the first carriage deposits the first couple of bridesmaids at the entrance to the church, and this goes on increasing in intensity until the bride and her father and mother descend from their brilliant carriage, when the buzz bursts out into an uncontrollable cheer.

Sir Robert Smugglefuss leads his daughter up to the church porch, four of the bridesmaids bearing her train; and the meeting of the bride and bridegroom sends a thrill of rapture and curiosity through the breasts of all who are assembled there to witness it.

The procession, which, for the most part, is quite fleecy and ethereal in appearance, having been duly formed and arranged, takes its way down the centre of the church, slowly, solemnly, and gracefully, amidst the suppressed whispers which rustle through every part of the church. Some of the whispers, indeed, are quite gushing, for the splendid appearance of the bridegroom has created something like hysterical excitement among the throng of young ladies who are present.

Sir Robert Smugglefuss had endeavoured to obtain the services of a bishop for the performance of the interesting ceremony of making Mary Smugglefuss and Darsham Typos Ghurr one; but he had not been successful in that endeavour, for, strange as it may appear, at none of

the civic banquets which had been given during Sir Robert Smugglefuss's tenure of office had there been a single bishop present, and so the worthy sheriff had been unable to make the acquaintance of one. The happy idea therefore suggested itself to his mind of making up for the absence of ecclesiastical dignity by the presence of ecclesiastical numbers; so, in addition to the local clergy, he had enlisted the service of the Lord Mayor's chaplains, a couple of minor canons from St. Paul's, and a City rector of great civic capacity. Consequently, the outside of the altar of the church on this interesting occasion, when the bridal procession of Darsham Typos Ghurr advanced up the aisle, presented almost as fleecy and gauzy an appearance as the *cortège* of bridesmaids itself.

I don't know that the actual ceremony of making Darsham Typos Ghurr and Mary Smugglefuss one differed very much from that which is performed nearly every day in the year in all quarters of the country, for people both of higher and lower degree than Darsham Typos Ghurr and Mary his bride. The ceremony of course was a novel one to the nabob, but it had been rehearsed to him until he had thoroughly understood it and its obligations. The interesting document, in which the most reverend father apostrophized Darsham Typos Ghurr as his well-beloved cousin—he being nothing of the sort, of course—was duly presented to the leading ecclesiastical functionary on the occasion, and solemnly inspected, as though it were some newly-discovered mysterious document; and then the solemn ceremony commenced, interrupted occasionally by sighs and tears. Those ebullitions by no means indicated tribulation, but joyous hope rather.

When the ceremony of investing the third finger of the left hand of the bride with the golden band that is the symbolical fetter of the married state had been completed, the nabob for the moment appeared inclined to treat the matter with levity, but he was promptly checked by a whisper from one of the gentlemen who had accompanied him in his carriage, and in a few minutes afterwards the benediction was pronounced in the usual form, all the clergy who had been required to assist at the laborious ceremony joining in the final response.

Some little confusion was created when the interesting ceremony of signing the register had to be performed, seeing that all the bridesmaids desired to witness it,

and as the vestry-room was very limited in its area, this was found to be impossible, so it was promptly decided by the officiating clergymen, that as all the bridesmaids could not be in the vestry-room at one and the same time, all should be excluded during the ceremony of the signature.

Against this arbitrary decision the bridesmaids became rather clamorous, as they had a singularly unanimous desire to see the nabob sign the deed which conveyed his own liberty, and so it was arranged that as they could not all do that, they should be admitted afterwards to see the signature, and this compromise established partial content amongst them.

And when the signature of the last attesting witness was attached to the register, Sir Robert Smugglefuss felt within himself that his glory had very nearly culminated, for now he was the father of a veritable princess. The princess herself was grandly equal to the occasion, and showed herself worthy both of the name she had recently borne and the still greater one which had just been conferred upon her.

The bridal party having returned from the vestry-room, had to remain some minutes at the altar while the compact which had been entered into with the bridesmaids was being carried out. And it seemed to be the prevision of good fortune that it should be so—at least so thought Sir Robert Smugglefuss and his daughter—for as the nabob and his brilliant bride stood upon the upper step of the altar, just in front of the communion-table, in the face of that gay congregation, Mary Darsham Typos Ghurr felt that her lord the prince and herself the princess were being presented to their admiring subjects, who were privileged to gaze upon the newly-married pair with rapturous admiration.

At length the inspection by the bridesmaids is completed, and the bridal procession is reformed. It passes down the aisle again, and then it emerges from the church-porch: the appearance of the gorgeous bridegroom by the side of his splendid bride is so thrilling, that a spontaneous cheer bursts from the assembled throng without, which is taken up and continued as the procession passes on its way to the carriages.

And then the bridal carriages return to Ganges Hall, followed by the throng of equipages that have been waiting outside the church for the invited guests. Why,

the road is lined with them, and every carriage is filled with splendidly dressed occupants, mostly young ladies, of course. Conspicuous amongst them are Splutterbug's, and Inglemud's, and Wiggletaff's, and Splog's, and Balderflint's carriages—indeed, Splog had three carriages, because there were all his nine daughters present. They were like steps, commencing at ten years and ending at twenty-four.

I shall not attempt to describe in detail the splendour of that wedding *déjeuner* at Ganges Hall. I do believe that the fashionable reporter himself was found to be not entirely equal to the task, albeit he eloquently discoursed of the oriental splendour and hospitality of the scene. He himself confessed that he was fairly dazzled, for the scene combined elegant privacy with regal pomp, whatever that meant, and might have inspired the genius of a painter who wished to depict a scene from the most glittering of the "Arabian Nights' Entertainments."

And brilliant eloquence inspirited the scene, for Splog proposed the bride and bridegroom, and Splutterbug proposed

his dear friend Sir Robert Smugglefuss, and the Right Honourable Tombola proposed Lady Smugglefuss, and that facetious City luminary, the Alderman for the Porkinsoak Ward, proposed the bridesmaids.

The nabob, Darsham Typos Ghurr, returned thanks for himself and bride, in a strain of allegorical Eastern eloquence, and declared his firm belief that his beautiful bride would prove the most charming wife he had ever had; at which some of the guests looked wondering, and so did Sir Robert Smugglefuss, rather: but he at once saw the drift of his son-in-law's declaration, when Splutterbug, poking the sheriff in the ribs, exclaimed, laughing, "That's so like the facetiousness of these orientals."

The travelling-carriage is at the door of Ganges Hall. Mary, the wife of Darsham Typos Ghurr, is in her travelling costume. Her brilliant husband hands her into the carriage, and amidst a shower of blessings and a cloud of slippers, the happy pair set out upon their honeymoon.

(To be continued.)

THE WANDERER.

LONG hast thou wandered in exile and sadness,

Sojourning far from the loved ones at home;

Life has brought little of sunshine or gladness

Since youthful fancy allured thee to roam.

Tossed like a leaf when the tempest is blowing,

Sport of each wind and each wave thou hast been;

Light there was none on the way thou wast going,

Darkness about, and despairing within.

'Neath the sweet sunshine of Italy straying,

Feeling the glow of her sapphire-hued skies;

Or, in fair Florentine gardens delaying,

Haunted by thoughts of Madonna-like eyes.

We would recall thee! oh, list to our pleading!

Tarry no longer away, we implore!

Still canst thou linger in exile, unheeding

All the fond love that hath blessed thee of yore?

Come! for the years that roll onward are dreary,

Reft of the presence that brightened them so.

Come! for with watching and waiting we're weary,

Faith is fast fading, and hopes flicker low.

Come! and the sunshine of life shall grow brighter,

Love shall enfold thee, no more shalt thou roam.

Linger no longer, thy heart shall grow lighter,

Resting once more with the loved ones at home.

OLD ENGLISH FERRIES.

Now moves the ferry-boat across the river,
Bearing the wealth produced by many a farm,
Oxen, and sheep, and fruit, and mid them all
The sun-browned cultivators of the soil.

We have often wished, when visiting the various exhibition rooms in London, that there were (in place of the many portraits, which too often occupy the best places and the largest space) a few more pictures of English scenery. Railroads are rapidly cutting up the face of the country, and in the course of a few more years, many a picturesque spot, that now ornaments the landscape, will be swept away, the manners and customs of the old-fashioned villages will be changed, and objects which have, time-out-of-mind, stood out like the bold bluff headlands that dot our coast, will disappear for ever. Nor do such scenes transferred to canvas stand out alone like "green spots in the desert waste," delighting only ourselves; but if well done, they multiply in engravings, and bring pleasant memories to a thousand hearths, carrying future generations back to the days of their "rude forefathers," and awakening many a dear remembrance, which but for them would have slumbered until the day of death in the dark chambers of forgetfulness. Such pictures call up images of repose, and beauty, and love; some of us were familiar with them in the earlier years of childhood. What poetical touches time hath given! How rich and mellow are the tints that memory throws over the whole landscape!—the winding road is filled with portraits, and we look calmly on that great gallery of the dead! This is but the imagination aroused while looking upon the sketch of a well-known scene. A portrait alone could not awaken such recollections!

Many of our fine old English rivers abound in beautiful pictures, not of landscape alone, but of scenes that come and go, like the shifting effects of sunshine, cloud-coloured: where but a minute before we saw every object as if cut out in gold, the next changes to a dim bronze, and then shuts all in under a cover of dusky green. Under such a sky as this (when sun and shade come down to play with one another on the earth), what can look more picturesque than a large flat-

bottomed old ferry-boat, creeping, as if half-afraid, from the further shore of the river, and throwing into the water, clear-shadowed images of sheep and oxen, the red cloak of an old market-woman, the blue smock-frock of some shepherd, and the white dress of the farmer's handsome daughter? Near and more near draws the huge square-headed boat, the splashing sound of the water broken by the bleating of the lambs, the lowing of oxen, and the voices of the passengers; heard for a moment, then lost again, just as the breeze rises and falls at intervals. How clear is the figure of the ferryman reflected, with his weather-stained jacket, as he leans over with the long boat-hook, rearing it at first, like a mast, above his head, then lessening it as the lumbering craft advances, now reaching but a yard above him, then coming to a level with his brawny shoulders, against which it rests, while with all his strength he walks the whole length of the boat, and red in the face as a lion, pushes her across the river. Up comes the long boat-hook once more from out the clear water under which it was buried, high up in the sky it rears, making a hundred pretty dimples with the drops that fall from it; the same Herculean arm again plants it in the river-bed: if it slips, overboard he goes, as he has done many a time; on, onward another length he walks; he has given her plenty of head-way now, and she will soon come grinding upon the gravelly shore.

Dost thou love beautiful pictures which bring before the eye the still green rural scenes of pastoral England? If so, look on this. That white-washed, old-fashioned building (partly covered with ivy), with its bay windows reflected in the river, is as ancient as the tall elm-trees that overtop it. It has been a public-house ever since it was built, and never was known by any other name than the Old Ferry House. It stood as it does now, with twisted chimneys and gable-ends, when one summer morning four of Cromwell's iron-sided soldiers, who bore on their helmets the marks of Marston Moor, came across, "fiery red with speed," to hunt out an old royalist, who resided in the Elizabethan manor-house, which is

still standing in the village. One may almost picture the old Puritans, with their pistols in their belts, and the bridles thrown over their arms, as they stand ready to leap out on the opposite shore. It would look well on canvas: one might tell by a glance at the countenance of the sturdy ferryman that they would obtain but little information from him about the hiding-place of the brave cavalier. Look at the brown high road, which comes bending down the brow of the hill from the centre of the wood that shadows its summit, until it dips into the very edge of the river. That road is almost as old as the hill over which it stretches; over there and across the river has been the highway to the neighbouring market-town behind us ever since the time of the Saxons, for there was a ferry here when William the Norman compiled that gloomy catalogue, called "Dooms-day Book." There was once a wooden bridge a mile or two lower down the river, but it was swept away ages ago by a winter-flood, and was never again rebuilt. Tradition says that the ferryman who then lived went down in his boat in the night, and sawed the middle piles of the wooden bridge asunder; but this is an old-world story, and all such ancient places abound in traditions. What groups descend the hilly road! How slowly that boy comes creeping down with his lambs: if he does not move quicker, the farmer on his chestnut horse will be at the ferry before him. How steadily the old woman comes trudging along in her scarlet cloak, with her black gipsy bonnet tied over her arm, and the basket steadied on her head; she has outstripped the old man in the blue frock, driving the donkey with its huge pair of panniers, which are filled with peas and new potatoes. That young lady in the riding-habit, who comes cantering along on her long-tailed white pony, is the daughter of one of the richest farmers in the village; she is off a-shopping, and the young drapers will put on their best bows when she arrives. You should see with what grace she will enter the shop of the head milliner in the market-place, carrying her riding-whip in her hand, and holding up her habit as a duchess does her train on a drawing-room day: she has pulled up to gossip with the old woman in the scarlet cloak, who is one of her father's tenants; she will listen until they reach the ferry, and hear all about old John's rheumatics, and the goose the fox carried off the other night;

the storm that blew down so many young apples; the fence the pigs broke through, and the cabbages and lettuces they consumed; and how near the old woman's daughter Deborah was of being married, when James "came to his harm" by a kick from the horse. And the young lady will persuade her father to mend the fence and replace the goose, and old John's rheumatics will be attended to—for the lady's grandmother is still alive, and grows no end of herbs in one corner of the garden, and has bottles filled with decoctions and lotions, which, with her presents of chicken broth and jellies, are found very strengthening.

Another ferry stands where the river rolls between two wild marshes, far removed from either town or village, the roads, which are said to have been thrown up by the Romans, run straight as a line within view of each other, stretching away for miles. Here the ferryman truly passes his life in solitude, for, saving at fair times or on market days, but few pass along that lonely road. His hut is the only human habitation which catches the eye in that vast extent of landscape. On both sides of the river the wide marshes are laid out for grass, and when the hay is harvested, hundreds of heads of cattle are turned loose, and may be heard lowing in the wide solitude. No hedge rises up to break the monotony of the scene; the boundary lines are long water-sluices, where the bulrush bows and the water-flag waves, and acres of rushes grow up and wither year after year, uncut or unclaimed by living man. If "Boat-a-hoy!" is hailed by some stray traveller, up starts hundreds of tufted plovers, wheeling and shrieking above the wild sedge, and flying farther away, to allure the intruder from their concealed nests, which are often trampled into the sinking soil by the heavy bullock. When the marshes are cleared of cattle and silent, and the eye sees only for miles thousands of acres covered with long grass, catching every reflection from the sky, sunshine, and cloud, and the breeze that sweeps across, the scene looks not unlike a vast ocean, whose eddying waves are without a sound. There is a silent grandeur in its loneliness.

Beside the river stands the ferryman's hut, a low, lonely-looking building, its roof rising but little higher than the old Roman road, and his long, straggling garden, saving for its few trees, scarcely distinguishable from the green wilderness

that spreads behind. An old ferry-boat, years ago sunk at the front of his house, and now filled with river mud, stands just as it was thrown, leaning upon the bank, by the flood, and is his chief defence against the ravages of the current; but for this wreck his hut might have been carried away long ago, like the summer-house he had built at the end of his garden, which, together with his large potato-bed, were all washed away in one night, after the breaking up of the ice on the river. In winter, when the waters are high, and roar and foam between the banks, his life is often in danger; more than once he has lost his boat-hook, and been carried away by the current, and cast upon a rugged wear, over which the water foams, and boils, and whitens, with a deafening noise, which must have rung terribly in his ears, when we remember that he never looked on the sea in his life. Talk to him about the perils of the ocean, and he will shake his head, bid you consider the large ships which he has been told sail upon it, then, pointing to his own ferry-boat, show, as plain as can be, that if you compare the size of the two vessels, the danger is equal. He is well read in Robinson Crusoe, and, beside his cat and dog, keeps several tame "pewets," and a lame raven, which is almost as old as himself.

Thirty years ago, he was near getting married; but as the moments of his courtship extended not beyond the time he ferried the fair damsel across the river, and this only for a fortnight, during the summer months, the match somehow or other was broken off. Rumour says, that love commenced one market-day, by the maiden remarking that he must be very lonely; to which he made no reply, until the fortnight following, when he acknowledged he was; but in that time the fair one had forgot all about it, and he never made any further advances saving once, when he inquired if she was fond of fish, and gave her two he had caught. So he continues to live alone; wind, and rain, and darkness, find him ever at his post; a day's illness, he says, he never knew; his brown, hard, weatherbeaten features are a living picture of health. Few would like to live in that lonely spot which is inhabited by the old ferryman.

Let us pass further north, to the Humber, to that arm of the sea which stretches into the German ocean; and from Barton to Hull we must cross a ferry nearly five miles in width. We

know not what the ferry-boats are now, but, twenty years ago, we were bundled into an open boat, amongst Yorkshire horse-dealers and Lincolnshire graziers, men, women, children, and cattle; now shipping a sea, then answering the wind with a scream; a wave roaring here, and a woman there; horses plunging one way, and the boat another; up this way and down that; and ten to one against our reaching within two or three miles of the point we steered for. Many lives have been lost in crossing this ferry; and one who would run his eye over the old country papers, as far as fifty years back, would be startled to read the losses they record. In foggy and windy weather, and during the dark winter nights, have the ferry-boats been run down by ships, drifted from their course, thrown upon sands, or grounded on banks, miles away from the spot where they ought to have landed. But steam-boats have, we believe, long been substituted for those open and dangerous crafts; where, for twopence, any one who ventured had as good a chance of being drowned, as if afloat on the broad bosom of the great Atlantic.

At more than one ferry have we been oared across by a "Lady of the Lake;" her father had, perhaps, gone to market; and she, who had all her life been nursed like a water-lily on the rim of the river, took to the element as if she had been born in it. Once we remember running aground in the middle of the Trent, sole passenger with a fairer captain than even old Charon bore across Styx. There was no help for it; the tide was fast receding; and we, in the large, bulky ferry-boat, likely enough to remain there until it was again high water. To make matters worse, we lost the boat-hook between us; and it may be somewhere on the "monstrous deep" at this hour, for we never recovered it. Her mother holloed from the opposite shore, but that moved us not an inch. Passengers continued to assemble, but ours was the only boat; and the longer we remained, the "harder" we were aground. "Perhaps we might launch it by getting out," said the lady. "But then we have no boat-hook," was the reply; "and we might drift as far as the Humber." The lady sat down, and from a huge pocket took out her knitting. Her passenger, to show himself equally at home, lit a cigar, and pulled out a book. "It is very provoking," said she, after having taken a few stitches, "but

cannot be helped; and you will be too late for the coach. And you really are not angry?" Angry, no! no man could ever look into such a face, and feel angry a moment after! There was a simple innocence in its beauty which we have seldom seen: it was a face that would have haunted a man on his death-bed, if he had caused but a tear to trickle down that peach-like, damask cheek.

In about an hour a boat from Nottingham passed, hauled by two horses; the captain hove to, and threw us a rope, which we made secure, and our little bark soon reached the shore from which we first started. Other passengers had better luck: and as the coach was lost for that day, we had only to receive the landlady's apology, order tea and dinner together, and take up our abode for the night. During the evening the ferryman and landlord (for he was both) had returned from market, and laughed heartily at our adventure with his daughter. He recounted many "a moving accident by flood and field" while over his pipe and glass.

Few have visited Nottingham without crossing Wilford Ferry, which is divided from the town by a wide range of pleasant meadows, acres of which are purpled over in spring with crocuses. This is really a primitive old ferry: a massy iron chain stretches across the river, and acting upon a moveable pillar, or short mast, which stands at the head of the ferry-boat, requires but the brawny arms of the boatman to keep shifting his hold of the chain; and with a score or two of pulls he brings his passengers safe to the sloping and gravelly shore. The village of Wilford is very picturesque, with its thatched cottages and little gardens dipping down to the very edge of the river; its neat looking church, surrounded with elm trees, every branch alive with the building rooks, which, with never-ceasing caw, are ever crossing the river, and hovering round the old grey church tower, half-buried in the greenery of the surrounding trees. Along the banks rise a beautiful avenue of trees, high, and old, and shadowy; and stretching their antique boughs far out over the river, and making cool and sunless (saving the chequering gold that shines through the network of the leaves) as delightful a walk as may be found along the many miles of embanked and winding paths that girdle in the hundred-armed Trent. Beyond this beautiful and shaded avenue

spread smooth verdant meadows, looking in the summer sunshine, and from a far distance, like acres of green velvet, hemmed with a wide and winding belt of silver; for so glitters the silver-skirted river on the border of these sloping fields of green, pastoral England, beautiful as those where Proserpine frightened let fall her flowers, when Pluto's wheels crushed the ungathered blossoms. Across these meadows, whose banks are washed with a thousand murmuring ripples, rises a bold round hill, dark with trees from base to brow, and with a steep, embowered wood dipping from the very forehead of the summit, and arching down to the level where you stand, before swinging open the ponderous gate. This is Clifton Grove, celebrated three centuries ago in old ballad lore, and well remembered by every reader of poor Kirke White; for this was his old and favourite walk. Down the ragged precipice which yawns and hangs headlong over the river, they yet point out the steep path down which the foul fiend dragged the fair maid of Clifton, on that dreadful night when a deep sleep fell upon her attendants; and there no grass grows. You might fancy that it had been ploughed up by thunder, could you forget that it had been torn up by many a torrent of rain, which comes down like a cataract, and empties itself into the river. But we will not seek to stir a leaf of its old superstition: many a young lover has wandered in the twilight of those solitudes, and shuddered at the vengeance which follows broken vows and plighted hearts. Spirits of the Past, pardon us if we recall some rural scene, and see your forms again bending in maiden white, as ye break the deep green of the scenery while stooping down to gather those sweet violets which by their perfume babble of their "whereabout," and lay nestled in little beds all over that beautiful grave. May the whole multitude of Marys forgive us, if in that haunted grove, and in the shade of those melancholy boughs—

"In such a night,
Swearing we loved you well,
We stole your souls with many vows of faith,
And ne'er a true one."—SHAKESPEARE.

Forgive us, if we slighted the old legend of love, and doubted the deeds of the foul fiend, while our soul was carried away by a fair one: and many such, we hope, will long haunt that romantic spot, and carry their victims to Saint Mary's shrine, as thou, dear Polly, didst, nearly a score of

years ago, carry off in triumph thy unbeliever. What hand now uplifts the latch of the door of thy dear old grandmother's thatched cottage? What elegant form stoops to gather the flowers in that little garden, hemmed in with its moss-covered railings? Old Time draws back the untwining honeysuckle, Memory adds the murmuring of her bees, Fancy fills up the silence of the gravel walk, brings back the flowing of the river, the dreamy cawing of the rooks, that bell sounding over "the wide watery shore"—and his arm is again around thy waist, and they sit down within the porch which is now another's. A boy calls his giddy sweetheart wife, and a thoughtless girl her boyish lover husband. Time thickens his troubles, Care comes, and Sorrow steps nearer, Grief wears a grave look, and Pity appears as if she had not seen Pleasure for many a long day; but still Memory and Love, linked arm-in-arm, laugh and stroll together, for they have tossed their craped hat and bonnet amongst the flowers, and wait the first toll of the bell ere they join the sad procession. Where are the famous cherry eatings of Wilford now? The poetry around the neighbourhood is fast fading. The flower-sellers, who used to stand under the sunny rocks of Sneinton, have vanished. The green footpath that led along the river bank to Colwick is closed, and the celebrated cheese seems to live but in name. Even the pathway that leads to the old ballad-haunted grove has been altered, and all "old things seem to be passing away." Beautiful was that old ferry on a Sunday in former years, when trade was good, and "all went merry as a marriage bell." A change has come over the scene.

In another ferry, at low water, the channel of the river is narrow, and you would despair of ever reaching the opposite bank, through such a width and depth of mud; and just as you are about to give the ferryman "a word or two of a sort," up strides a huge, broad-shouldered, powerful fellow, half-buried in boots, and with a "Now, sir," walks you off on his back, and sees nothing in it, on his part, but a daily and common occurrence. Should a lady remonstrate, he has but one answer, and that he is polite enough to give, sometimes in the shape of a question, as he says—

"Why, ma'am, you would not surely like to walk?"

For our part, we laughed heartily, and thought of Robin Hood and the ducking

he got, in the old ballad; and we felt thankful that Big Boots had not fallen and buried us in the mud. We were told that he won his wife by such an accident. It was a feast time, and he had taken too much drink, but he apologized in so handsome a manner, that Betty in a few weeks consented to become Mrs. Boots; for by that name is he called by the ferrymen and passengers. His father was boots to the boat before him.

Next to the ferries, in beauty, is the ford; only passable in the summer and fine dry months of autumn. To those who are strangers to such a sight, it has a startling effect, to see a laden waggon, axle deep in the water, and drawn by oxen or horses, moving slowly across a wide river. In harvest time it forms a beautiful picture: the yellow and hanging corn, thrown and shadowed upon the water, with the varied colours of the oxen, "moving double"—is a scene scarcely to be surpassed, as a painting in English scenery. Many accidents have occurred in passing these fords: when the current has set in too strong, men and cattle have been washed away and drowned; and we well remember putting off in a boat to rescue a milkman, who, with his cans and horse, was swimming down the stream at a rapid and dangerous rate. The wicked said, he had gone in to water his milk; for it had a strange blue look when skimmed in the morning.

Primitive and quaint are those little old-fashioned drawbridges: such a one, especially, do we remember across the ancient Roman fossdyke near Lincoln, which was opened and shut by two old women, each of whom turned round a large handle, while the bridge moved with a heavy, cumbrous and groaning sound. A great treat was it, for us boys, to stand and ride on that old drawbridge. We fancied ourselves knights, crossing the moat to some enchanted castle; and well could one of those worthy old dames play the part of the dragon, especially on a washing-day.

And where art thou now, Dedemiah? (strange name for a farmer's pretty daughter!) Twenty years ago did we cross Hazleford Ferry with thee, on a beautiful morning in summer; we were the only passengers, and our path lay the same way for a long and pleasant distance. Forty-five miles was not then a day's walk to be frightened at. Many a time have we done it, and been laughed at by older men for our boast—men who

have cleared fifty miles of ground within fourteen hours—but that day, Dedemiah, we fell far short of our task; thy father's cottage stood in our path, it was the village feast, and we entered together. How our cheek burnt, when in thy brother's face we recognized an old companion; and thou lookedst not up, but drooped thy long eyelids to the ground—the roses that stood peeping in at the old diamond-paned window, looked not more lovely than thou didst that moment look! And thy mother, with her searching eyes, when she found how brief had been the term of our acquaintanceship, stood serious for a moment, then smiled, and forgave us both. A few months were to elapse, and then thou wert to have "been mine own," and for thee then he would

"Have herded cattle on the hills:"

very poetical with thee beside us; but thy father thought "the lad would never make a good farmer, who was so fond of books." We thought him but an industrious clod, and marvelled how such a sweet flower as thyself could spring from it; "and so we parted."

What glimpses of beautiful scenery has her name recalled!—Moonlight on the road and on the river! The still village, with its whitewashed cottages, sleeping in the silvery moonshine, and looking, with their ivied porches, and thatched roofs, and overhanging trees, as if they formed a part of a great picture!—a night scene, in which nothing ever moved!—where all things ever seemed the same! And that old ferryman, who grumbled

when we aroused him from his bed, was he ever young, or ever in love? We thought not, Dedemiah. And thy aunt's cottage, on the opposite side of the river, how lovely it looked in the moonlight, every window-pane flashing back the dazzling beams! Then the murmuring sound that the rippling water made, all night long, as it rolled its surging silver to the shore, dreamy, calm, peaceful, beautiful,—a land which fancy had lighted up with sweet poetry!

How oft memory withdraws the curtain to reveal the past! What a blank would life seem were it not for such scenes as are again revealed! Who covets the solace of forgetfulness, or would wish to blot out all, and again begin anew? To obliterate the beauty of that great landscape, because there hangs over it a few dark clouds? Jenny and the apple-tree, and the two old men, who have ceased to become friends, and whose reminiscences are, we think, so finely depicted by Mackenzie, is a beautiful illustration of this feeling. Old age, but for memory would indeed be solitary. It is the everlasting lamp of the ancients, lighting up what would otherwise be the dark tomb of the mind. They who love not old home feelings, and delight not in calling up images of the past, live in a land unvisited by poetry; each day is but to them a "great fact," and they are unhappy if the next produces not a greater. We love to sit and dream in the "green old world," and shall be sorry to witness the destruction even of our OLD ENGLISH FERRIES.

THE CONFESSION.

On the last day of December, in the year 1825, as the cathedral clock of R—— was striking the hour of eleven, the scene we are about to disclose took place within the walls of the parish workhouse of that venerable city.

It was one of those stormy nights of intense winter that occasionally, and at long epochs, visit the earth with the combined terrors of wind, hail, and deluge, as if, for her long endurance, Nature revenged herself by letting loose the elements in aggravated horror, to appal the guilty and correct with fear the ungrateful heart of man. The resistless wind howled down the deserted streets, and up the narrow passages and gloomy lanes, as if the spirits of the dead, torn from their graves, rode shrieking and wailing on the invisible wings of the tempest; while the mingled hail and rain drove hissing to the earth in one continuous deluge, which, as it beat the obstructing houses and the flowing streets, sent up a mist from its shivered particles, to fall again in hazy showers upon the flooded city. The roar and surge of waters, as the swollen river foamed and lashed against its banks and piers, with the tearing wind and the deep and muffled utterance of the booming clock, heard through the tempest like an unearthly knell, combined with the dark and desolate streets, completed a scene of the wildest terror and desolation.

Within a wretched garret, where one pale and flickering light revealed the darkness visible of the cheerless room, stretched on a miserable bed, half covered by a dingy rug, lay a gaunt and wasted woman in life's last hour of suffering.

Standing a few feet from the dying pauper were two hard-faced, ill-clad women, gazing from time to time on the wasted form upon the bed, or holding a muttered conference in mumbled whispers, as they shrugged closer their bare arms and yellow hands, rolled up from the cold in their coarse aprons.

"Ain't it tererble!" exclaimed one of the crones, in evident fear, as the old tenement shook to its foundation, and the wind battered fiercely on its jutting gables, and roared in hollow thunder down the yawning chimneys, making the huge framework tremble through every joint and beam.

"Hark! what dismal sound is that?" faintly murmured the dying woman, casting her languid eyes on the two nurses, who stood apart in eager dialogue, as the dull boom of the cathedral clock echoed, at long intervals, like sepulchral groans, through the reverberating chamber.

"It's the big church a-striking eleven," replied one of the women in answer; then turning again to her companion, she observed, 'What a plaguey time she is a-dying! I wish this priest o' her'n would come and let us off. What a fuss, indeed! as if our minister warn't good enough for the likes o' her.'

"Never mind, Betty, it ain't for long; she's very nigh most gone, and we shall have a cup o' tea immejuntly we've done," replied her friend.

"Eleven, and not yet come—eleven, and no priest yet!" mournfully rejoined the poor creature in tones of anguish. "My time so short, and no confession made—no absolution for my sins! O God! O God! send me a priest in time, and do not let me die unshrived—unpardoned of my sins!"

"There she's at it agin. Blest if I ain't sick o' her priest. Dear-a-me, ain't I cold—I'm nigh purtrified with the cold, and my rheumatiz so bad. And a keeping us here for nothing. Why don't she die like a Christian at wonst?"

"Heart alive! ain't the wind high, and how it is a-raining; my handies and feets is most friz off. How tejus some folks is dying! Have you got the handkercher handy, Polly, to tie up her jaws?" inquired the first speaker, shrugging up her skinny shoulders higher under the woollen tippet that hung like a shaggy mane down her bony back.

"The missus give me one o' her'n," replied the woman addressed, partly unrolling her shrivelled arms from the apron in which they were swathed from the cold, and exposing a tattered neckerchief for the purpose indicated.

"Hark! Betty, I hear some one a-coming! It's his reverence himself, I s'pose. Did you ever see a real priest, Betty? I did wonst," continued the harridan, in a lower and more mysterious tone.

The next minute the low attic door was gently opened, and the tall, bent figure of a venerable but prematurely

aged man slowly entered the dim and spacious chamber. Taking off his saturated cloak and hat, he placed them on a broken chair, and, having addressed a few words in a low voice to the attendants as to the state of the sufferer, he motioned the women to leave him alone with the invalid. As the two crones left the room, rejoicing in the relief from their irksome watching, the priest approached the brick shelf that formed the mantelpiece of the empty chimney, and, taking down the waving light, drew near the bed of the dying woman. The light, as it fell for the first time on the sufferer's countenance, revealed the hollow and careworn, but still regular features of former beauty, though now cavernous and contracted by long suffering and the near hand of death. The eyes, large, lustrous, and full of soul, beamed from their bony cavities with an unnatural fire and intellectual energy, giving her countenance that ghastly expression that we sometimes see in a wintry sky, when a stray sunbeam lights up the sickly canopy with a smile of jarring brightness. Her eyes alone preserved a semblance of all the loveliness of feature that must, in former times, have made her eminently beautiful.

A sudden tremor of the hand that held the light, and an involuntary start, betrayed the emotion of the father as he encountered that brilliant glance and emaciated face. Three times, with a shaking hand, the priest advanced the flickering candle over those wasted lineaments before his tongue could pronounce the few words of the church's formula, or his rigid fingers perform the action of the redeeming symbol. At length, mastering the tremor that shook his frame, the venerable man drew his unsteady hand across his wrinkled brow, uttered a deep sigh that sounded like an imprisoned groan, placed the wretched light upon the floor, and, throwing himself on his knees, devoutly folded his hands, and in a low, tremulous voice, that gradually assumed strength and harmony as he proceeded, recited the beautiful prayers for the dying, and offered up the supplications of the church for the soul-weary and transgressing. It was several minutes after concluding his offertory prayers before the firm-closed fingers of the priest relaxed their rigid compression, or he arose from his supplicating attitude, and took his seat by the head of the pale penitent. When he had seated himself there was a clammy dew upon his fore-

head, and a look of such intense anguish on his convulsed features, that the father bent his head, and drew the rough chair on which he sat further from the influence of the light, that the perturbation of his frame might escape the inquiring glances of his unshrived suppliant.

"Holy father," faintly murmured the dying woman, "your pious words have opened to my long-closed heart a beam of heavenly peace and joy. Oh! let me profit by the blessed good already felt, and, by confession of my sins, obtain the consolations of my early, but long-neglected faith—pardon for the contrite and unburdened heart."

"I have learned, my daughter," began the priest, in a husky, faltering tone, "that the malady in which you lie is mortal, and that the time you have to live is already shrunk to hours and minutes. Bethink you, then; another hour, and this finite world on which you totter may be changed for the kingdom of the eternal. Speak, then, erring daughter; confess your mortal sins with all the rigid truth that He, the Judge and Justifier, will demand of all at that great bar, to which thy soul already spreads its wings to carry you;" and as the speaker paused, he passed his hand over his brow, and by a strong effort endeavoured to master his quivering features.

"God so judge me as I speak, the solemn truth!" exclaimed the penitent with sudden energy, pressing the crucifix the priest had given her devoutly to her lips.

The confessor bowed reverentially and in silence to this asseveration, and, grasping both arms of the chair with his hands to steady his trembling body, awaited in patience the promised revelation.

"Father," she at length began, "my life has been like a bright morning of the early year, replete with happy promise, but doomed to end in stormy night and wintry desolation. Out of the large circle of friends and visitors that my parents, fortune, and position brought daily to our house, my father had selected one, a gentleman especially endowed with all the qualities that captivate our sex in man, as my intended husband. In every point of view, in similarity of tastes and temper, as in the religion of our families, Edmund Mowbray was a highly eligible and suited match, and I esteemed him with that devoted ardour of the heart,

and deep devotion of the soul, that form the character of woman's first enthrallment in the bonds of love. I told you, father, that our tastes and sympathies were alike. Alas! I only hoped and thought so then; the knowledge subsequently of this disclosure awoke my first regret and fault, and led to all my after misery. Young, ardent, courted by the world, affianced to a man who combined the powers to please, instruct, and captivate, and the first idol of my young fancy, it is not to be wondered, in the happiness I felt, that I refrained to search the real nature of my heart, or probe my disposition home, in quest of what I could not apprehend at such an age; or that I should pry with a too curious eye into those shades of character in my lover, which, if I saw at all, with the confidence of a woman's love, she is sure to place to the indulgent credit of the man who wins her young affection. But I wander, holy father, and time admonishes me of my near departure. We were married—married in the bloom of health and youth, and in the midst of happy and rejoicing friends; and I, proud in my beauty, proud in my fortune, and prouder in my husband, whom I loved with all the devotion of my heart, felt myself supremely blessed. Oh! I loved him, father, as the source of every hope and joy—loved him fondly, deeply, holily—loved him as life itself!"

A deep groan escaped through the closed teeth of the priest, as he convulsively clenched his bony fingers on the chair, and bent his bald and wrinkled forehead to hide the anguish depicted in his face.

"Oh! do not censure me, holy father," resumed the trembling penitent, in reply to the confessor's involuntary exclamation; "I speak in justice to an injured husband!"

"Dishonoured, rather! What, woman!" hastily interposed her listener, "would you prevaricate in death? Dishonoured, was it not?" he demanded, sternly, between his set teeth.

"Ah! yes—yes! but not till after. Oh! hear me—hear my vindication, holy father!" she cried, in supplicating accents.

"Death stands beside thee, miserable sinner; beware, then, and do not stain thy last account on earth with subtle reservation. Go on, and let thy last confession be a sacred record of the blessed truth. Proceed!"

"I will—I will!" she exclaimed,

piously clasping her hands. "Three years of unalloyed and tranquil happiness—such peace as mortals seldom find on earth—were mine, passed in the daily interchange of those virtuous and domestic joys that make earth a happy foretaste of eternity. At length into this blissful Eden the tempter stole, and turned my paradise to guilty ruin. My husband had a friend. Oh, father, spare your judgment till I have revealed the whole! This man was gay, handsome, almost fascinating, and his polished speech and specious arguments awoke from its buried depths the fatal revelation in my heart, and taught me that I, too, was giddy, worldly, gay, and not as I had dreamed—my nature consonant with my husband's temper—grave, studious, and contented.

"Day by day my peaceful home became an irksome prison to my new-born appetites, and my domestic duties grew a monotonous and distasteful burden to me. I sighed for gayer scenes and newer joys, and wondered how my dull and sober home had ever charmed or pleased me. I longed to shine and triumph in that gay world, of which I only heard, as from afar, the stale reflected tidings. In vain I urged my studious husband to renounce his books and country life, his profitless and cold retirement, and take a part in the bright stage of life and fashion.

"Oh, father! so far had the tempter's evil counsel assailed my heart, and vanity and pride possessed my mind, that I rebelled against my husband's gentle sway, neglected all the loving arts by which I held the empire of his heart, and vented bitter murmurs at what I deemed his selfishness, and my own condemned and buried life.

"One night, when I had urged my unavailing suit with more than usual wilfulness and heat, my husband rose from the perusal of his book, and with that deep harmonious voice that passion never shook, but now more grave and inflexible from the persistency of my suit, commanded me never again to broach a subject which, from that hour forth, he would not listen to, and, with a frown of marked displeasure, desired me to leave his presence till I had regained my former love and duty.

"Piqued and humiliated by his unwonted words and manner, I hastened to my room, and, with a beating and an angry heart, prepared myself for rest. Half an hour might have elapsed—I had

dismissed my maid. Oh, father, father! my brain seems burning as memory calls back the horrors of that night, and my shrunk veins again throb wildly at the bare remembrance of what transpired, and I—I must tell."

"Go on," hoarsely muttered the priest, as the crazy chair shook and creaked under the compression of his nervous fingers.

"A noise," she continued, in short and gasping utterance, as she cast an imploring look on the locked and dusky features of the confessor, and marked the drops of sweat that looked like a glistening hoarfrost on the furrowed brow of the white-haired priest, as he sat erect and sternly terrible by her bed—"a noise, like the light tread of a footstep on the floor, caused me to start and look around, and I beheld, with terror and dismay, my husband's friend, the tempter, standing before me. For an instant shame and indignation held me spell-bound. At last I demanded how he had dared to insult me by such intrusion, and approached the bell to summon aid; but, intercepting my intention, he seized my hand, and, in spite of my resistance, approached me.

"What would you do?" he said. 'It is by your maid's connivance that I am here. She will not answer your call; and you would but expose yourself before the eyes of your wondering servants.'

"Begone," I cried, 'begone, or I will rouse the house, and call my husband!'

"Be wise, dear Agatha," he rejoined, 'and do not sacrifice your reputation by such a rash procedure. Besides, you do not love this misanthrope; nay, more, you hate the dull, distasteful life this priestly husband compels you to endure, and from your heart despise the man who keeps your soul in holy fetters. Hear me, dear Agatha. I love you passionately, devotedly. Fly with me, then, this instant: quit this monastic prison, and share with me the bright and happy world in which Nature ordained that you should shine and triumph.'

"Well, you acquiesced."

"I—I—I," stammered the guilty creature—"I do not know; so many feelings crowd to my mind, I remember not."

"What! would you propound a lie upon your bed of death? Would you prevaricate before your God?" exclaimed the priest, with stern and denouncing emphasis, that sounded harsh and fearful

through the still chamber. "Miserable woman, would you die—die with a half-formed lie upon your guilty tongue? Sinful outcast, bethink you well! Oh, it is horrible!"

"No, no! father, spare me!" shrieked the trembling creature, seizing with imploring eagerness the tightened wrist of the confessor with her emaciated fingers. "No, holy father, I did not love him; my heart was faithful still: my mind alone—my roused and woman's vanity alone was treasonous to my husband; he alone I loved and honoured; to him I was still pure and chaste."

"You had not sinned? I charge you, speak," demanded the priest, with hoarse intensity.

"No, no, I was then a true and loyal wife," she answered, quietly.

"Swear it!" ejaculated the confessor, in so haggard a voice that the words sounded more like an imprecation from the shades than the utterance of a living tongue.

"I do, I do! God is my witness!" fervently responded the penitent.

"Go on," sighed the listener, while the big drops of anguish fell slow and heavy, like summer rain, from his wet locks and wrinkled forehead.

"My husband entered the room. Oh, merciful Heaven! shall I ever forget, even in the grave, the changing horror and the hideous passions of his face? That terrible and deadly look has haunted me by day and night; I never, never lose it!" And she covered her eyes with her wasted hands, and cowered beneath the clothes in abject terror.

"Did he suspect you, then?"

"I do not know," she replied, faintly.

"Or might he not, in the fulness of the love he bore you, have come to kiss away the memory of his reproachful words, and promise all you sought?" he inquired in a tone of intense feeling.

"Oh, yes! I often thought so, father; for when I first encountered his approach his eyes were full of love, his face like hopeful spring. But oh, my father, how soon a fearful change ensued! He did not speak, but, like a thunder-cloud, his brow grew black as night, his face paler than death; while his protruding eyes, dilated and bloodshot, seemed like balls of flashing lightning. His sinewy chest heaved and swelled, his fingers parted and bent like frightful talons, and his whole frame rose and distended like a giant. I gazed in stupid fascination on

the unnatural change before me; while my destroyer, unconscious of my husband's presence, still remained. In vain I strove to speak, to move. I was entranced and powerless; but with every faculty of mind rendered tenfold acute and terrible. I saw—I felt; but could not speak or move. At length their eyes encountered; my persecutor staggered back before my husband's threatening and fiery glance. And they stood confronting each other; the one livid with fear, the other black with passion. I saw it all, and understood each flash that darted from their opposing eyes; yet still I stood as if my limbs were iron-bound and rooted to the floor.

"With one tremendous bound, like a hungry cheetah or a mountain cat, my husband sprang from the end of the room, and buried his deadly fingers in the throat of his retreating foe. A dreadful struggle then ensued, as they went in rapid circles round the room; while the two men, no longer human, but like wild beasts in savage warfare, with red eyes, clenched teeth, and tearing hands, fell thundering on the floor. Father, I have heard of wolves and lions fighting—of the hyenas' murderous conflict; but nothing ever rose to match the horror of those two human tigers as they ground their malicious teeth, and tugged and struggled in their embrace of death. Oh, it was ghastly, hideous! At length my husband rose—for the encounter did not endure above a minute's space—and with his firm knee pressed his antagonist, face downwards, on the ground, while with his hands he grasped his victim's jaws, and forced his head backwards on his spine, till I could hear the stretched sinews and the cracking bones yield under the giant force that rent and fractured them. Then springing up with the strength of a Hercules, he poised the heavy burden in his hands, and harled it with superhuman power full on the stony angle of the wall. The body fell with a dull weight, and lay coiled and mangled on the floor, its starting eyes beaming with cold intelligence full on me, who stood like a living statue, appalled and iced with horror.

"There!" cried my husband, with an exulting laugh, and pointing like a demon to the contorted corpse. "There lies your lover; now fondle your new idol, and bring him back to life with your warm kisses and devoted love."

"How long I stood alone, entranced,

before that dreadful form, I know not. My room was far removed from aid, and stood at the extremity of the large mansion; but many, many hours elapsed before my frozen blood began to thaw the ice that bound my heart. At length a cry, the voice of wailing infancy, shot like electric fire through every vein, and woke, with a cry of terrible revulsion, all the dormant feelings of my frame. It was my child, my boy, I heard. I rushed to the adjoining room and seized my child, and, hastening back, pressed it closely to my heart, and kneeling down before the murdered man, swore—impiously swore—to be avenged on him who had impugned my honour and outraged every tie of love by such a dreadful deed."

"And did you never pardon him?" inquired the priest in a low and faltering voice, as he spread his hands before his face.

"Oh yes! oh yes! Was he not my husband still—my heart's first joy?"

"Proceed!"

"Morning was breaking, cold and wet, as with my tender infant I fled from my husband's room. I fled—I knew not where; my only wish was to place measureless distance between that hated man and me. My nature was completely changed; malignity and hate alone possessed me. I cannot tell you, father, all the sufferings that for twenty years have harrowed up my soul—the depths of woe, the scenes of crime, that I have met and borne, till, at length, remorse and penitence touched my long-callous heart, and urged me forth to seek and ask forgiveness of my husband; but it may not be; my breath grows short—my eyes——"

"The boy! the child! what became of the child?" demanded the priest vehemently, as he rose from his chair and leant, with open mouth and staring eyes, over the sinking woman.

"He died," she gasped,—“my beautiful, my loved, died; although, to keep the famine that I endured from him, I—I—father, pardon me!—perilled soul and body; fell, father, to the lowest depths of infamy. I sold myself to—to feed my child! Pardon! forgive!” she sighed as her head sank lifeless on the pillow.

A cry like a despairing mother's, when she sees her infant perish, burst from the heaving chest of the distracted priest as the body of the pauper fell back on the

bed. Tearing off the coverlet, he grasped the emaciated corpse in his arms, and, pressing it convulsively to his breast, fell on his knees, exclaiming, in frantic tenderness, "I do, from my soul! even as I hope for pardon."

The matron, who had become alarmed at the altered voice and manner of the usually passive priest (for her curiosity had tempted her to listen to a considerable part of the dying patient's confession), earnestly requested me, as I chanced to enter the house at the moment to visit a case in the accident ward, to make some excuse to enter the room, and see what, as she termed it, had "possessed" the usually taciturn and tranquil father.

Large as was the cheerless garret, and noiselessly as I entered its distant door, the priest heard the motion, and springing to his feet, stood with clasped hands apostrophising the motionless body, as he half turned his face in the direction where I had suddenly stopped, and speaking as if to me, and what the first glance convinced me was a corpse!

"Hear me! hear me!" he exclaimed, in wild appealing accents, as if his voice could arrest the dead, and stretching his arms over the bed as if to detain the passing spirit. "Hear it all! He does forgive you! Agatha—love—wife! look up—if

but for one instant! and behold your Edmund—your sorrowing, your broken-hearted husband. Speak to me! say you forgive! look on my withered form, and see how I have suffered too! Agatha! Agatha! O God! O God! she does not hear! She's dead—dead, and will not feel the kiss of pardon, or know the bitterness of my remorse. She is my wife, I tell you! No, it is false," he continued in an altered tone, "I'm not a priest! That was in my madness, when I had lost her; but now that she is found, I am once again a man—ay, and a terrible and dangerous one. Stand back, and let us pass! She is my wife, I say." Then, in an altered voice tremulous with emotion, he added, "Believe me, gentle sir, she is indeed my wife—the lovely being who in my youth I swore to cherish and protect. She is my heart—my life—my bliss itself. Stand back!" he again cried vehemently, springing forward as if to escape from imaginary foes, and clasping the body frantically to his breast. "I have found her, and no human power shall wrench her from my arms. Away!" The next moment, exhausted with his mental griefs, the stretched nerves gave way, his body shook as with a sudden palsy, the corpse slid slowly from his embrace, and with a despairing cry the unhappy husband fell heavily to the ground.

THE ROSE.

(From the German of LEMNAU.)

COULD I bring this lovely rose,
Maiden, dear, to thee,
Fresh as here it blooms and grows,
How happy would I be!

But before I backwards roam
The weary miles I've pass'd,
All its beauties will be flown—
Not long the roses last!

Lovers ne'er should further stray
From the dear one fair,
Than the rose so fresh and gay
All glowing they can bear.

Or further than the nightingale
Seeks straws to build her nest;
Or, borne upon the evening gale,
Her song floats from the west!

INDIAN JUGGLERS.

WHENEVER we attend an exhibition of sleight-of-hand skill in this country, we go to the appointed place knowing full well that the exhibitor has provided means and appliances sufficient to baffle the keenest vision, and render detection all but impossible except to the initiated—that all the apparatus the conjuror employs is especially constructed for this end, and that the handsome table behind which he stands has nothing in common with ordinary specimens of that useful moveable, except the “outward species and external accidents of the tabular nature.” Everybody knows that he has a confederate busy behind the scenes, in assisting him to produce those wonderful transformations, or palming on an unsuspecting public counterfeit duplicates of such articles as require more particular inspection or manipulation than could well be given them in view of the audience.

The Indian juggler goes on quite a different plan; he never has recourse to any of those useful accessories for deluding the spectators, but trusts to his own manual dexterity and sheer force of impudence for making one's eyes contradict the evidence of their other senses. He comes into the verandah of your bungalow, or the patch of sand before your tent, and without further preliminary than a few salams, commences the exhibition of his strength and skill.

These people generally travel in troops, which vary considerably, not only in merit and number, but in the line they undertake; some confine their attention to feats of strength and dexterity; others are mere buffoons, generally very tiresome; others are accompanied by women or boys dressed up to represent them, who dance and perform sundry antics hardly admissible at court. Animals of different kinds also take part in the performance, first by patiently submitting to have their heads cut off, then stuck on to their tails, and finally replaced in their original position; and afterwards, to prove their perfect recovery, going through a variety of tricks.

Let me introduce the reader to an ordinary party of jugglers which presented themselves to me one tepid evening as I sat outside my tent, attired in a style which might be called classical, as there

was very little of it, and that little remarkably loose and easy.

They consisted of three men and a little boy. All their stage properties and needful apparatus were carried between two of them in a circular basket some three feet high, which appeared at first sight to be minus a lid, but which proved on closer inspection to have a more fatal defect—that is to say, it was bottomless; the rounded shape of the other end evidently showing that it was not intended to rest upon the ground. Baskets of this kind are common in many parts of India, and are used to confine the erratic propensities of kids, fowl, and such-like small deer, or placed over grain or food of any kind to preserve it from their incursions.

One of the two—whom the others addressed as Roostum (the Indian Hercules)—having announced that he was universally allowed to be the strongest man in the universe, commenced operations by lying down, and having folded a cloth double, placed it on his bare chest, and allowed several good-sized stones to be broken thereon with a hammer. Then, standing up, he threw a heavy paving-stone up some twenty or thirty feet, and caught it as it came down on some part of his head, neck, or shoulder, which he had previously pointed out.

This he repeated several times, and never failed to catch it exactly on the spot indicated. Of course he had some knack of breaking the fall, as otherwise it must have bruised him severely, or even stunned him, when it fell on his head. He then procured from the cook-shop a large log of wood, intended to be cut up for firing. It was green and heavy, about eight feet long, and the thickness of his own waist. Round the centre of this he fastened a piece of thin cotton rope, which he shifted until both ends were evenly balanced. He then went away a little distance, made a short run, and stooping down seized the loose ends of the cord between his teeth, and with many uncouth yells and gesticulations threw the log of wood clear over his head and several feet behind him.

A friend who dropped in just at this time made him repeat the trick, which he did nearly in the same manner, except that he swung it backwards and forwards several times before giving it the final

throw, and we were both convinced that he did not touch it with either hand or foot, or in fact in any way, except by the cord he held in his teeth. To look at the man who performed these feats you would say he was an active, loose-made fellow, but by no means athletic. He had none of the well-developed muscle and starting sinews of an English prize-fighter, and his calves were as nought compared to those of a stout navvy or a London porter; nevertheless he must have been in capital condition, as he did not appear in the least tired after performing these and many other feats, all of which he accompanied with muttered groans and various strange noises, probably to convince us how difficult they were, and to induce us to proportion our bucksheesh to the greatness of the exertion required.

The boy was then brought forward—a plump, merry, well-fed little fellow, about nine years old. Whatever he may have cost his parents for eating, he certainly was not expensive in the item of clothes, as his entire costume consisted of an amulet, hung round his neck by a coloured string, to avert the evil eye, and a pair of very *retroussée* shoes. Having first asked him if he was afraid, which he at once denied, they tied him up in a kind of coarse net so tightly that his legs and arms appeared quite pinioned. Then having emptied the basket above-mentioned of its miscellaneous contents, they placed it over him, till the lower part touched the ground and completely hid him from view—a tight fit it seemed too. A spear was then thrust through the centre of the basket until its point protruded at the other side, and the boy was asked if he was hurt. The reply, “I am not hurt anywhere,” appeared to come from some distance, which was probably a bit of ventriloquism.

After this the spear was withdrawn and the basket lifted up, when the little fellow was discovered in precisely the same position as when it was put over him. The spear used on this occasion was one of the ordinary kind; a wrought-iron head fitted to a handle made of a male hill-bamboo, which is solid all through and very tough, while the female is hollow, except at the joints, and brittle. Economical housekeepers often convert the latter into a cheap and portable vessel for holding salt, flour, &c., by sawing it off so that the solid part of the joint forms the bottom, scraping the inside smooth with a bit of glass, and hang-

ing it up by a string fastened round the top.

A swordsman then came forward to exhibit his dexterity with the weapon, whirling it about in most alarming proximity to the heads and faces of his companions, and showing both force and address in the way in which he managed it. He was most anxious to operate on a goat of mine which was tethered near, undertaking to cut it in two by a single blow. However, as the goat was an old friend and travelling companion, as well as a capital milker, I preferred keeping it in its undivided state, and was foolish enough to refuse the tempting offer.

The best thing he did was with a vegetable, something like one of our vegetable marrows, which one of the other men held for him at arm's length. Off this he shred several slices perfectly even, and not much thicker than a penny piece. The remainder was then placed on the palm of the hand and cut in two by the other without drawing blood from the hand on which it was placed. This was not done very accurately, for as my friend observed, one half was a good deal larger than the other. The tulwar, or native sword, is a fearful weapon in skilful hands. It is very much curved from the centre up, broad, well tempered, and keen as a razor. The scabbard is always wood or leather, as a metal one would dull the edge. Its shape not being adapted for thrusting, the point is never used, but a drawing cut invariably given, to assist which the gripe is small and handle narrow, lest it might turn in the hand. The natives are generally much more skilful in its use than our men, and sometimes wield it with an effect too terrible to be believed except by those who have witnessed it. I have several times seen a hand lopped away clean from the wrist, or a head cut off by a single blow. The head, however, is seldom severed completely from the body, it generally remains attached to it by a small strip of cartilage, making the ghastly spectacle more hideous even than when the swift and silent guillotine has performed its bloody office.

The third man, evidently the leader of the party, was the last to come forward. His face looked young, though his hair was grey; probably he had overtaxed his energies and was paying for it by premature old age. His limbs were so supple that they seemed as if all bones had been taken out of them, like a turkey dressed for supper, and some pliable stuffing in-

introduced instead, for he could bend and twist them into all imaginable postures. He approached nearer to the quadrumana than any human being I ever saw, being literally as handy with his feet as with his fingers.

He possessed, also, an extraordinary power of isolating the volition which directed the motion of one set of muscles, so as not to interfere with the action of another set. Thus, he could balance a spear on his head whilst he kept up a set of knives in the air; or, squatting on the ground, he would keep up several different-coloured balls with his hands, and a set of rings in motion with his feet, at the same time joining occasionally in his companions' conversation.

I should have mentioned that every new trick was ushered in by a dialogue, ostensibly secret and confidential, but as it invariably contained some allusion to the anticipated reward, and the propriety of making it a large one, I may perhaps be pardoned for listening, under the impression that it was intended for my ear. To take, as a sample, the way in which the rest and perhaps best part of the performance was introduced.

First juggler, loquitor—"Brother, you are a very clever fellow. I am sure this illustrious gentleman must be greatly pleased."

"I hope so," quoth number two. "I would like to gratify him, for I have always heard he is so generous to poor folk like us."

"True, my brothers," chimes in number three. "I have heard him praised everywhere for his condescension and liberality; but what I see of him now far exceeds the reports I heard. I am certain he will order us a good buksheesh."

It is, of course, unnecessary to mention that the rascals had never heard of me in their lives, and did not even know my name. One of them suggests that it would doubtless be very pleasant to me to have a tree growing near my tent, nowhereupon I am appealed to, as to whether I would prefer a citron or a lime-tree, and also to point out exactly where I would wish it to grow. I decide in favour of the lime, and indicate the spot by dropping the ash of my cheroot about a yard away from the place where I had been sitting. The bottomless basket—as manifold in its uses as the cocoa-palm to a Madrassee or reindeer to a Laplander—was again brought into requisition, placed over the spot selected, and covered

with a cloth. In less than a minute the cloth was removed and I was allowed to look in, when there appeared the stem of a young tree growing out of the sand, with a couple of bright, fresh leaflets making their appearance near the top. The covering was put on again and water poured over it to make it grow, and I was then given another peep through a hole in the top of the basket. The tree had grown considerably, and was covered with leaves and blossoms. The covering and watering process was repeated a third time, and when I was next permitted to look in there appeared a *bona-fide* lime tree, about two feet high, with fruit in various stages of maturity growing on it. The men were naked from the waist up, so that they could not secrete anything in their sleeves or about their persons, and how they managed to perform this trick in so exposed a place, surrounded on every side by spectators, is a mystery to me, but I have related it exactly as it occurred.

Besides those jugglers who confine themselves to their legitimate line—feats of legerdemain—there are an innumerable host of showmen, who remain at home only during the rains, and wander about during the rest of the year through all parts of India, reaping a scanty subsistence by gratifying public curiosity.

Fortunately for those who sojourn there, street music, as practised with us, is unknown. If it ever extends to the East, it must prove a more intolerable nuisance than hot winds, mosquitoes, and sand storms put together; for the natives possess several instruments of twenty-organ power, too excruciating in their shrill discordance to be borne by any ear that has not been accustomed to them from childhood.

Katpootlee (*Anglicé*, wooden doll), nautches, or puppet-shows, are common, and often very cleverly done, as they embrace a much wider range of characters than the stereotyped performance of our Punch and Judy. But the thing in which natives excel is training animals, domestic or otherwise. With them time is not money, and their patience appears inexhaustible. They seldom lose their temper, and seem to delight in teaching; consequently, under their tuition, birds and animals exhibit a degree of docility seldom seen elsewhere. In the days when Pandies and mutineers were not synonymous, every regiment could have furnished birds enough to form an aviary.

On the march, every hackery was covered with little oval tin cages, containing their feathered favourites; and you could not go near the lines of an evening without seeing pet birds—generally parroquets or partridges—perched on their master's shoulder, or running after his heels like a dog.

Having mentioned the word "Pandies," which occurs so frequently in letters and accounts from India, it may be as well to explain what it means, without pausing to inquire whether the name was bestowed from that innate love of slang which characterizes Anglo-Indian society, or because a recondite phrase always appears to convey more obloquy than a familiar one. The Brahmin tribe is subdivided into more than a hundred different castes, which, though all included in the generic term "Brahmin," are so distinct that they will not intermarry or eat with each other, and may be distinguished by their final name, which is common to every individual of the same caste. The commonest of these, the very John Smith amongst the thrice-born, is "Pandy," and hence the term is applied to mutineers in general, as about one-third of the late Bengal army was composed of Brahmins of various sorts.

A man bringing round a monkey and a goat may frequently be met with in all parts of India. The monkey, a wrinkled, sedate old fellow, has evidently made up his mind that it is his kismet to suffer for other people's amusement, and goes through the most ludicrous antics with a gravity as immovable as that of Mr. Tupman dancing a quadrille.

The goat is well trained too, and exhibits the most extraordinary power of retaining his equilibrium in the most difficult postures. Three or four pieces of wood, shaped like an hour-glass, and each about eight inches high, are placed a-top of each other, forming so unstable a pillar that the slightest touch, or even a puff of wind, would upset it. There seems hardly space on the top for any quadruped to find footing there; nevertheless the goat manages to find room, and balances himself with apparent ease by placing all four feet close together.

Bears are led about, who dance without any poetry in their motion, and fight most savagely without hurting each other, as they are kept muzzled and their claws closely pared.

They wrestle and then roll over each other, uttering most ferocious growls, stirring up a cloud of dust, and essaying occasionally to scalp their antagonist, which is a favourite and generally successful method of attack with them. It produces little apparent effect upon the tough hide and thick coat of one of their own species, but probably repeated attempts had established a raw there, as an assault of the kind always seemed to stir the other up to the most ungovernable fury, and showed that there is some reason for comparing a cross person to "a bear with a sore head."

There is another very interesting animal which I have seen exhibited in various parts of India, but regarding which I never could arrive at any satisfactory conclusion, nor did I ever meet any one who could solve the difficulty regarding it. It is a cow or bullock of the humped species common in Hindostan, led about by a fakeer, who makes a good thing of it by exacting coin from all Hindoos as a tribute to the odour of his sanctity, which is generally strong enough to be unpleasantly apparent, and expecting from every one else some recompense for the pleasure of beholding him. The fakeer, when showing off, delivers a kind of address to the spectators, and without changing his tone or looking at the animal, tells them it is going to lie down, get up, make a salam, or pretend to be lame of a leg, all of which it instantly does; but its docility and intelligence are not so surprising as a peculiarity in the animal's formation. It is so much bedecked with strings of beads, necklaces, and small bells, that you may not observe anything singular until the fakeer draws your attention to a piece of skin hanging down by its shoulder. On examining more closely, you perceive there is growing out of the top of the hump what appears to be the skin of a diminutive calf. All is perfect except the head, down even to the tiny hoof which terminates each leg, and the boneless tail hangs down in empty helplessness like a hussar's dolman.

I looked upon the first specimen I met as a *lusus nature*, and attributed it to some congenital malformation, but from having met two or three others subsequently, of different colours and opposite sexes, I am led to doubt whether this conclusion was quite correct or not.

PERILS AND DISASTERS.

By LIBUT. WARNEFORD, R.N.

No. 3.—BEVIS HILL, MARINER: AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY (1657).

I WAS picked up, and I dare say born on Bevis Hill—so named after a giant famous in his day—on the ninth of June, in the year of our Lord 1622. Bevis Hill is about two miles distant from Southampton on the Portsmouth road. Thomas Finch, who found me on the way-side, but poorly wrapped up, was an honest, God-fearing man, who gained his hard livelihood by boating folks over from Southampton to Hythe, a village opposite that port, and also by piloting vessels up and down the river. It was he who piloted the *Mayflower*, which took out the Pilgrim Fathers, as they call them now, out to sea, and very proud he was of having done it. He had a brimstone wife, but no children, so they adopted me, calling me after the place where I was found. Mrs. Finch was a spitfire, but not bad at bottom—could read and write pretty well, and taught me. Rather rough teaching, but perhaps that was the only way, for I was always a gnarled, cross-grained cub. I took to the sea naturally; so I did to girls, which did me good. Being a surprising swimmer for my age, fifteen, I was able to save the life of Miss Mary Lintott, whose father was Mayor of Southampton; poor Finch being drowned, as were the mayor's brother and nephew at the same time. They hired our boat for a sail on the river, and when about half way to Calshot Castle, which is about nine miles from the port, a sudden squall capsized us. I caught hold of the young lady's dress, and held her above water by one arm, swimming with the other. Finch could swim, but was getting feeble by reason of years, and after about a quarter of an hour's struggle—he kept on quite as long as that, being stout of heart—went down. I could not help him. The two gentlemen sunk like stones at once. The tide, a spring-tide, was flowing, and well knowing its set, I reached the mid-current, and was floated on till I gained hold of a boat fastened at the stern of a collier anchored off Southampton, having been two hours and more in the water. It was quite dusk when I climbed into the boat, and with much difficulty pulled

in the insensible and, I for some time feared, dead young girl. She recovered on board the collier brig, but was not quite well for several months afterwards. This was thought to be a great thing on my part, though I didn't understand how any one who could have done what I did would not have done it. She was an only child, the apple of her father's eye. He was a rich man, and said I might count upon him for a friend through life. He kept his word. He made Mrs. Finch a weekly allowance, and apprenticed me to the master and owner of the collier brig. Her name was the *Dolphin*; the master's, Bilton—Andrew Bilton; and a hard task-master, a dour villain he was, but a skilled, hardy seaman. The *Dolphin* hailed from Sunderland; and seven long and bitter years—close at least upon seven—I served in her. A rude school is the collier coasting trade; feeling your way along the iron-girt coast on long winter nights, when the frozen sails feel like sheets of copper, the ropes like bars of ice, the shore generally under your lee, easterly winds prevailing mostly at that season. But it is a school which turns out the hardest, most fearless, reckless seamen in the world. Hundreds, thousands, perish in the seasoning; but those who survive are true, genuine sea-dogs. Spaniards, "Portugals" sailing south of the Line, where there was no peace, knew that full well. The pick of Drake's, Dampier's, Hawke's men were trained in that man-making school. But I may not prate of such matters, nor dwell too long on the time of my youth, when I remembered not my Creator, or these evil days would not have come upon me. I have much to tell, and but few hours to tell it in. "Ephraim is given to idols: let him alone!" This is the terrible sentence long since fulminated against me, my idols being Gold—Vengeance! How often did the still, small voice within warn me that if I would save my soul alive I must turn from those false gods or — But the sands in the hour-glass are few, and pass swiftly. That which my hand has found to do must be done

without delay; for the darkness in which no man can work will soon pall me in its dunnest shroud. Regrets avail not to give back one bitter hour of the mis-spent past. What is done is done; and the lost, vain lamentings which gather before us in our earthly pilgrimage but serve, like the stern-lamps of a ship, to throw a dreary light over the track upon which we may never return.

Yet searching through the dark backward and abysm of time—I have read Shakespeare—my gladdened gaze rests upon some bright spots. The saving of Mary Lintott's life is one, and an occurrence on board the *Dolphin* on the night of the twelfth of September, 1641, is a yet brighter eye-mark.

There were troubles in the land. The king and parliament were in hot dispute, which all men said only the sword could decide. I recked not of such matters; but I knew that both parties were filled with fury towards each other. The *Dolphin* was once dismasted in the Wash during a terrible storm, and it was a special providence that she rode it out, two cables having parted during the night. A third, by God's mercy, held; and the weather having mildened, we went soon after day broke into Great Grimsby to repair damages and get two new masts. There was on board at the time one Ravenshaw, who had been to the North on business, and had taken return passage in the *Dolphin*, which was bound for London. He was a proud, grand fellow; but I didn't at all like him from the first. He and skipper Bilton were thick as thieves. I could not understand why we brought up and anchored in the Wash—the wind, though dead east and rising, not being so fierce but we might have weathered Cromer very well, and continued our voyage. Three hours afterwards it would have blown the horns off a bull. By God's mercy, as I have said, we got safely into Great Grimsby harbour. It was there, at least in the neighbourhood, Ravenshaw had his dwelling. Rather a fine place—I was there twice, the third time warned to do so by a dream. I don't say that I exactly believe in dreams—that angels, ministers of grace, specially visit, warn us during the hours of slumber. May be no, may be yes. In the case I am speaking of, it was, I dare say, some words I heard pass at the Elms—the name of Ravenshaw's place—between him and the skipper, that caused the dream: yes,

I think so. There was a Mistress Feltham, a relation of Ravenshaw's, staying at the Elms—a young and likely wife, with a child-son. It seemed, so far as I could make out, that her husband had somehow got his head in the lion's mouth, and would have it lopped off for high treason unless some powerful friend, whose wife Mrs. Feltham had been brought up with, could be gained over. That is what I understood, but I never was anxious about the ins and outs of the thing. I quite understood, however, that if the husband was made a head shorter, Ravenshaw would come into a large property, supposing the son should die too, and that the only chance of Mr. Feltham escaping a traitor's doom was the intercession of the great lady who was staying at the time at Ipswich. The brig's repairs were at last complete; we should sail immediately, and land the lady and child at Ipswich. Some subterfuge must have been invented, some story told, to prevent Mrs. Feltham journeying by land to that town. I supposed that I overheard the skipper and Mr. Ravenshaw agree to finally conclude about Madam Feltham and her son the next evening. They were to consult together in the Blue Room, where there could be no listeners. I knew the Blue Room; and no doubt that conversation caused my dream, or helped with other things to cause it. So I went and hid myself in the Blue Room, in a recess concealed by a sliding panel. But no one came there—neither Mr. Ravenshaw or the skipper. So I came away, and should have stepped on board the *Dolphin*, which was all at aunt, no wiser than when I left her, had I not in stealing away from the Elms, passed unobserved in the darkness Bilton and Ravenshaw. It was raining hard, and they had taken temporary refuge under a large, leafy tree in the avenue. The thing wasn't mapped out quite clear, but I understood well enough that Mrs. Feltham and her child were somehow to be drowned during the passage to Ipswich. I was sure of that, though my brain was muddled at the time, more so before I got on board, by drink. That has always been my failing. I should else have been—well, not here. We sailed the next morning, standing well off from the coast. We made smart way, and soon after evening fell the *Dolphin* lay to; a boat was lowered, the shore light seemed about a couple of

leagues distant, being, the skipper said, the beacon at the mouth of the Orwell river, leading up to Ipswich. There was but little sea on, and Mrs. Feltham and child would be rowed to land; the *Dolphin* to be kept lying to till the boat returned after landing them. Two sailors—Johns and Sebright—unmitigated ruffians both, capable of any deed of villany, were to be the oarsmen. Johns had been tried at Shields for the murder of a young woman with whom he kept company. She had, no doubt, been killed with brutal violence; a child that, but a few days afterwards, would else have seen the light, died with her; but the crime could not be legally, it seemed, brought open to the murderer. Sebright was such another scape-gallows villain; and these two ruffians had, I remembered, been in close consultation of late with Bilton. It was plain to me how the murder of Mrs. Feltham and child would be managed. They would never reach the shore; never again be heard of. Such deeds were not unfrequent. There was no echo to swift tidings thereof to the ear of authority. And what could I do? Warn the lady? Tell my suspicions to the crew? Folly! madness! Yet, come what might, I would not tamely suffer that gentle lady to be drowned—murdered! In my sea-chest were two pistols; I hastened down, secured them, but had only powder and ball for one. I was resting about for another charge of powder—it signified not for a bat, a metal button off my waistcoat would answer for that—when the harsh voice of the skipper calling upon Johns and Sebright to be sharp, warned me that not another moment must be lost. I hurried upon deck, and seizing an opportunity, dropped unperceived into the boat, and crept under a tarpaulin which I had let quietly fall into her bow. The night darkness favoured me. The lady, I could hear, was unwilling to trust herself and child in an open boat at night, so far from land; but there was a harshness in the captain's tones which convinced her she had no choice but to go. She and her son were lowered into the boat, which immediately shoved off. There was not much fear that I should be speedily missed, nor did I believe it likely that the intended murder would be committed till the boat was lost sight of by the crew of the *Dolphin*. That was in my favour, and I felt bold, confident. I have many failings, but being an Englishman, cowardice

is not one of them. I never felt, that I remember, more happy or so proud. Nothing was heard but the lady's quick, hard breathing,—the visible, yet shapeless presence of a great fear, chilled, oppressed her,—and the measured dip of the oars till the ship was but faintly discernible from the boat—the boat consequently invisible to those in the ship. I watched through a slit in the tarpaulin, which I held just sufficiently wide to do so with my left hand; the right was free, and grasped the loaded pistol. The murderers muttered something, and each unshipped his oar. The moment of trial was at hand, and my thumb gently pressed back the pistol-lock to full-cock. "Stand up, ma'am," fiercely cried Johns, himself standing up; "come more forward." Upon her feet, with the child in her arms, she could be tossed overboard with ease. Mrs. Feltham did not move, speak, clasped the child more tightly to her bosom, and looked with dumb terror in the ruffian's face; hers the faint starlight showed to be white as stone. "You won't, eh?" savagely growled Johns. "Well, it's no matter, over you goes anyhow." There was a struggle, a scream, cut short by a loud report, and the scattering of the assassin's brains by my pistol bullet. Before Sebright could know where he was or what had happened, he was stunned, knocked over by the brass butt-end of that same pistol. Hurra! victory! I manacled his hands, his feet, spoke the lady soothingly, and sculled for shore. It was safely reached. There were hearings before the Ipswich magistrates. I was much praised; there was some stir in the matter, but the unquiet time pushed it out of hearing. The lady was grateful—would, with her husband's help (her lady friend procured his liberation), have secured my permanent advancement in life, but the old vice marred my fortunes.

Again in Southampton. Mr. Lintott, Miss Mary Lintott, did not believe for a moment I was the reckless reprobate—my only good quality, disdain of death—that some collier-fellows from Sunderland and Shields had reported me to be? Not they. It was true, nevertheless. I was, no doubt, the child of sin, literally conceived in sin. Well, it could not be my fault that I was basely born! Yes, the saving of Mrs. Feltham and child is a precious memory. I loitered years away, not growing better as they slipped past. I was near thirty years of age—the king had been

beheaded, Prince Rupert was on the seas, and, urged by Mr. Lintott, who was a staunch loyalist, I thought to join him. I might have hit upon the means of doing so had not the devil found me other work. I had married. A not so young but very comely woman, living at Portswood—Portswood is a village near Bevis Hill—caught and fixed my fancy. She was a mother, but neither wife or widow. Her daughter Janet was therefore base-born like myself. I cared not for that. She herself was very poor. Had that not been so she would not have gone to church with me; she once told me so. Yet I loved her to distraction, with all the fire of my fierce nature. The father of Janet was, I knew, a mariner like myself: his name, Ritson. That was all I knew concerning him.

It was an unhappy home; and after a violent quarrel I left it, intendingly for ever. I had met with a seaman named Pearce, who was at hide-and-seek, having run from the *Stag*, one of Admiral Blake's ships. He had seen service as a buccaneer on the Spanish main, and was always talking of the great gains to be made there. He awakened in me that serpent of the soul—the greed of gold—always, no doubt, latent within me, and which, once roused, gave me no rest. Were I rich, my wife would love me. I would try for fortune on the Spanish main—enrich myself with the Spaniards' spoil. But how get there? In what plight be when there? That was the question, suddenly resolved by the merest accident. I was loping about on the Southampton quay, when a one-armed seaman came hurrying to the landing-steps where a boat was fastened. He expected to find two of his men in her, but they were absent, not supposing he would return so soon. He was captain of the *Mermaid*, a fine brig anchored in the river, and which had been there some days picking up a crew. Sykes, the man who had run away from the *Stag*, came up, as the devil would have it, just at the time. Captain Edwards was impatient to go on board, and asked us if we would pull him off and back. We agreed to do so. This was at early evening. Edwards only wanted to fetch some papers, which done he immediately returned. There was only one man on board, the crew being ashore on leave, as the *Mermaid* would drop down the river with the ebb-tide the next morning. The brig mounted six brass cannon, and

we both, Sykes and I, had no doubt that what had been whispered about concerning her destination was correct. She was intended for the Main, and just the ship for that work. Captain Edwards gave us a Spanish silver piece, as it happened, bade us secure the boat, and himself went away quickly towards the High Street. The same wild idea had struck both of us; only a word or two was exchanged—quite enough—and the moment Edwards was out of sight we shoved off and pulled for the *Mermaid*. Wind and tide were favourable; the brig in less than two hours would have turned Calshot Point, be out of sight, and successful pursuit out of the question. There was no craft in the river that could, if ordered to do so, overhail the *Mermaid*.

"We shall easily get a crew," said Sykes, "at Guernsey. I am known there, and acquainted with fellows of the right stamp, who won't ask many questions if the rhino is all right, and there is a bagful of the silver shiners which the skipper has given us out of one of the cabin lockers. Gold ones too, depend."

That was how the matter was settled; and in about a quarter of an hour or less, the *Mermaid* was dropping quietly down the river. The mooring cable we had severed with an axe. The man on board was compelled to help us under penalty of being flung to the fishes,—so that we were able, the weather being fine and mild, to manage the sails well enough. The wind was due north; we made between seven and eight knots; by noon on the morrow we sighted Guernsey, and not long afterwards dropped anchor in the roads. The man belonging to the brig—I did not hear his name—had been disposed of during the night; not by my act nor with my spoken consent, though I knew as well as Sykes that he could not be allowed to live. One crime always begets another, and the progeny is sure to be worse than the parent. That man's death sits even now heavy on my soul. Sykes went on shore, sculling himself in a small boat, taking plenty of shiners with him. He was to be captain, I first mate, but to share and share alike. He had no difficulty in picking up a crew of the right sort. Most of them had served in one of Prince Rupert's rovers,—the *Rose*, I think, which had foundered in the Channel not long before, a portion of the crew only escaping with their lives in a boat. We set sail the same even-

ing, our immediate destination being the Scilly Islands. We had enough men to sail the ship, but not to fight her. Spanish galleons were not to be had for the asking; and we knew that nowhere could sea-desperadoes be met with in more plenty than in the islands, which Sir Richard Grenville and Rupert would have turned into a stronghold of pirates but for Blake's cannon.

I shall pass briefly over the next five years—years that I would fain blot from the tablet of memory, so stained, blood-spotted is the terrible record. Not without redeeming points. It was who mainly helped to rescue—but self-praise is not the purpose of this writing. The reckoning, all mitigating circumstances, weighed by Infinite Mercy, and to be summed up by Infinite Justice before another sun shall set, will, must be, a fearful one!

I was rich at the end of those five years. I mean that my share of the spoil, fairly divided, was large. Yes, but I had to deal with a man whose lust for gold was greater, far greater, more ravenous than mine. We quarrelled. The crew took different sides, and a fierce, bloody fight ensued. I, my side, was victorious, but the triumph was short-lived and dearly purchased. Sykes, the fiend who tempted me to crime, felled me in the hurly-burly of the contest by a terrific blow on the face with an axe. He himself was killed immediately afterwards: that, however, I did not know till many days had passed. When I recovered consciousness, I was in New England. The *Mermaid* had by some accident caught fire during the contest; it was found impossible to extinguish the flames, and the crew took to the boats; a man who had once fallen overboard and I had rescued from drowning, helped me into one, and some forty-eight hours afterwards we were picked up by the *Salem* of Boston. I was treated with great kindness, and when quite recovered, sailed in the *Nantucket* for England. All that was left me of my ill-gotten gains was just six hundred pounds. That sum I had transmitted to London from Jamaica, through Captain Jonas Steele, one of the Cromwellian officers, who had helped to wrest that West India island from Spain. He was to deposit the money in my name at James Gregg's, a wealthy, well-known goldsmith, of Fleet-street, which volunteered service he faithfully performed.

A fearful judgment had fallen upon me. The blow with the axe dealt by Sykes had so disfigured me, so changed my features, that when I first looked into a mirror, I could scarcely believe it was myself who stood before it. It was not so much the ugliness of the face which startled me, as that it was not *me*. No one could have recognised Bevis Hill!

I landed at Portsmouth on the 5th of July—five years and one month after the piratical carrying off of the *Mermaid*. I passed under the name of Simson, which was that I was known by to Captain Jonas Steele. I took the stage to London, obtained my money—that officer having sent me a written receipt for the same, signed by James Gregg, which fortunately came to hand, and was upon my person when I was taken off the *Mermaid*. At Southampton I put up at the Tiger, a small hostelry near the Bargate, once a familiar rendezvous of mine. The landlady had known me and my wife well, but had not the faintest notion that she was speaking to Bevis Hill. In a roundabout way, pretending to have met with myself in distant parts some years before, I asked her about the stealing of the *Mermaid*—pretending that Bevis Hill had boasted to me of the exploit, the truth of which I had doubted. She said it was quite true; adding that Hill, though he had some good qualities, was brave as a lion, had been a sad drunkard; and it was very fortunate for his wife—a very good sort of woman—that he was out of the way. The report was that I had been killed in an attack upon a Spanish galleon. I *had* been severely wounded. Mr. Lintott, lately dead, believed it; so did Mrs. Finch, who had also departed this life. The widow of Bevis Hill, she said, still lived in the old place at Portswood, with her daughter Janet; but she (the landlady) had not spoken with her for some months.

I then went away towards Portswood. Truly as I live and must answer to God for what I state, it was my intention to give my wife the whole of the six hundred pounds, except a sum sufficient to keep me till I could get a ship, and never molest her more. My love for her was ardent—more ardent than ever; it was all of healthful life remaining to me. Knowing that, and that she believed herself to be a widow, I should have made more exact inquiries before seeing her. Had I done so, I should have been told that

she was about to wed with Ritson, the father of Janet, and that they were to embark in a few days for the American plantations, in the barque *Lily*, then moored off Southampton. Had I heard that, surely I should have sent her one-half at least of the six hundred pounds, pretendedly from her deceased husband, and forebore to see her. I think so now, at all events.

She was at home, her daughter with her, both much happier than ever I had seen them look. The very sight roused the devil in me! But I quelled him for a time. I said my name was Simson; that I was the bearer of a message and money from Bevis Hill, her husband!

My wife started, changed colour—she was far more comely than when I left Southampton—and asked *what* message I had brought? The money she did not mention. I said the message was one of love and hope of forgiveness. The money was over five hundred pounds in gold, which I had brought with me, and approaching I placed the bag containing it upon the table.

"Ill-gotten gold!" she exclaimed; "I'll none of it! I forgave him long since, whilst supposing that I could never see him more; and I humbly trust he has found forgiveness at the dread judgment-seat, before which he must have appeared with the blood of piratical battle upon his before sinful soul. I shall not accept his money,—it would bring a curse upon me and mine. Take it away. Richard," she added, springing up with joyful welcome, "Richard! see, your wife might have a rich dowry!" and she repeated what had passed.

"You should not, with my consent, touch one piece of that blood-money! His gifts should have perished with him."

"You are harsh, Richard," said my

wife, gently; "we are all sinners. Keep the money yourself, my good man," she added; "we want it not. And take this glass of ale."

As I, choking, tasted that, he tasted her lips. Ha! I did not kill her *then*.

I hurried off, muttering that the money was not mine. How was it? What savage feeling could be tearing at my heart that I *would* force that gold upon them? I did not quite understand myself at the time, but a few days afterwards, when I saw her jauntily decked out, and wearing rich ornaments which that gold purchased, I had a clearer conception of my devil-nature.

"Ha! ha!" I ferociously chuckled in the Holy Rood church. "Ha! ha! I, the outcast husband, have paid, my jaunty bridegroom, for your bride's wedding finery! That debt will bear interest, and the day of payment is not very distant. You will not have sighted the shores of the New World when it shall arrive."

Two days previously I had obtained a berth as foremast man in the *Lily*. We should sail together.

All ready. The *Bine Peter* is flying. The *Lily*, Captain Mosely, is ready to start. The anchor is hove short. A few more turns of the capstan, and it will be a-trip. We are only waiting for the yesterday married pair and their daughter. They have slept late, of course; but here they come at last. And who is that coming off in the same boat? A Mr. and Mrs. Conway. I had seen the names in the passenger-list. But who is Mrs. Conway? Mary Lintott, by all the fiends in hell!

To-morrow I shall be hanged for the murder of my wife upon the high seas. I *would* have killed Ritson, but was prevented. The details are well known. May the Lord be merciful to me a sinner.

REMARKABLE FASTS.

HIPPOCRATES asserted that most individuals who abstain from food for seven days, die within that period; or, if they survive this time, and are even then prevailed upon to eat or drink, they still perish. Various instances of persons who have lived much longer without sustenance have been observed. In the records of the Tower we find the history of Cicely de Ridgeway, who was condemned to death for the murder of her husband in the reign of Edward III., and who remained for forty days without food or drink. This being ascribed to a miracle, she was of course pardoned. From the result of this starvation, the story may be considered fabulous for two reasons: first, from the improbability of the alleged abstinence; and secondly, from the selection of forty days, a period clearly fixed upon for miracle-making, being the exact number of days our Saviour fasted.

We have a better authenticated case in the one mentioned by Dr. Eccles in the *Edinburgh Medical Essays* for 1720. The starved person was a beautiful young lady, about sixteen years of age, who, in consequence of the sudden death of her father, was thrown into a state of tetanus (lock-jaw) so violent as to render her incapable of swallowing for two long and distinct periods—the first of thirty-four, and the second of fifty-four days—during which she neither experienced a sense of hunger nor of thirst, and when she recovered she was scarcely reduced in size. Sir William Hamilton saw a girl, sixteen years of age, who was extricated from the ruins of a house at Oppido, in which she had remained eleven days: an infant in her arms but a few months old, had died on the fourth day, as the young are not so able to endure abstinence. Dr. Willan attended a young man who had abstained from any sustenance except a little water flavoured with orange-juice for sixty days: death ensued a fortnight after. Foderé mentions some workmen who were extricated alive from a cold damp cavern, in which they had been immured under a ruin for fourteen days. Cetois, a physician of Poitiers, relates a still more singular case of total abstinence in a girl, who from the age of eleven to that of fourteen took no nourishment.

Ann Moore, called the fasting woman of Tutbury, was to a certain extent an

impostor, for although there was no truth in her assertion that she lived an incredible time without food, yet it appeared evident that her chief, if not her only support, was tea. That fluid is sufficient to maintain life appears evident from two papers inserted in the "*Philosophical Transactions*;" one of them giving an account of four men who were compelled to subsist upon water for twenty-four days, and the other of a young man who tasted nothing but the same fluid for eighteen years. An imposition having been suspected, he was shut up in close confinement for twenty days as a trial, when he uniformly enjoyed good health.

Another wonderful instance of the same kind is that of Janet M'Leod, published by Dr. M'Kenzie. She was at the time thirty-three years of age, unmarried, and from the age of fifteen had had various attacks of epilepsy, which had produced so rigid a lock-jaw that her mouth could rarely be forced open by any contrivance; she had lost very nearly the power of speech and deglutition, and with this all desire to eat or drink. Her lower limbs were retracted towards her body; she was entirely confined to her bed, slept much, and had periodical discharges of blood from the lungs, which were chiefly thrown out by the nostrils. During a few intervals of relaxation, she was prevailed upon with great difficulty to put a few crumbs of bread comminuted in the hand into her mouth, together with a little water sucked from her own hand, and in one or two instances a little gruel; but even in these attempts almost the whole was rejected. On two occasions, also, after a total abstinence of many months she made signs of wishing to drink some water, which was immediately procured for her. On the first experiment the whole seemed to be returned from her mouth, but she was greatly refreshed in having it rubbed upon her throat. On the second occasion she drank off a pint at once, but could not be prevailed upon to drink any more, although her father had now fixed a wedge between her teeth. With these exceptions, however, she seemed to have passed upwards of four years without either liquids or solids of any kind, or even an appearance of swallowing; she lay for the most part like a log of wood, with a pulse scarcely per-

ceptible from feebleness, but distinct and regular. Her countenance was clear and pretty fresh, her features neither disfigured nor sunk, her bosom round and prominent, and her limbs not emaciated. Dr. M'Kenzie watched her with occasional visits for eight or nine years, at the close of which period she seemed to be a little improved.

A Dutch girl of the name of Eve Hergen is reported to have lived from the year 1597 to 1611 with no other support than the scent of flowers. The magistrates of Meurs suspecting imposition, had her closely watched for thirteen successive days, without being able to detect any fraud. Over her picture were affixed some Latin verses, of which the following translation was given in a book called "An Apologie or Declaration of the Power and Providence of God, by George Hakewell, 1635:"

"This maid of Meurs thirty-six yeares spent,
Fourteen of which she tooke no nourishment;
Thus pale and wan, she sits sad and alone,
A garden's all she loves to looke upon."

According to Pliny, the *Astoni* had no other food than this Batavian maiden, being unfortunately born without mouths. Sauvages mentions an academician of Toulouse who never thirsted, and passed his summers, notwithstanding the intense heat, without drinking. In most of the recorded cases of total or nearly total abstinence, water has been found more or less necessary, but not invariably.

That some animals can thrive upon water, and even upon air, is demonstrated by naturalists. Snails and chameleons have been known to exist upon air for years. Garman has found that this nutriment is sufficient for the support of spiders; and Latreille has confirmed the experiment by fixing a spider to a piece of cork, and precluding it from any communication. Every entomologist repeatedly sees insects living in their cases, although pinned down for an incredible length of time. Mr. Baker relates that he kept a beetle shut up for three years without any food. Mr. Bruce kept two cerastes, or horned snakes, in a glass jar for two years, without any apparent food, he did not observe that they slept in the winter season, and they cast their skin as usual on the last day of April.

Rudolphi kept a *Proteus Anguinus* five years, and Zoys had one for ten years living on spring water renewed from time to time. Redi found that birds could sustain the want of food from five to

twenty-eight days. A seal lived out of the water and without nourishment for four weeks. Four individuals of a large species of larval shell (*Bulimus*), from Valparaiso, were brought to England by Lieut. Graves. They had been packed up in a box, and enclosed in cotton; two for a space of thirteen, one for seventeen, and a fourth for upwards of twenty months; but on being exposed to the warmth of a fire in London, and provided with tepid water and leaves, they revived and lived for several months in Mr. Loddige's palm-house, till accidentally drowned. Dogs can live without food from twenty-five to thirty-six days, but man does not easily support starvation more than a week, except in disease or insanity.

The general effects of long fasting, however, are highly injurious when not destructive. They are chiefly feelings of great debility, fever, delirium, violent passion alternating with deep despondency. In general the temperature of the body falls several degrees, although Currie observed the contrary in a patient who died of inanition in consequence of a stricture of the œsophagus; the respiration becomes fetid, the secretion of the kidneys acrid and burning, and according to Magendie and Collard, bloody, and the stomach is found contracted after death. Experiments on the duration of life in man and animals deprived of food, show that the warm-blooded animals are best able to support the want of food.

But a phenomenon still more wonderful is the faculty that animals have been known to possess of living when deprived of atmospheric support. A hog, weighing about one hundred and sixty pounds, was buried in his sty, under thirty feet of the chalk of Dover cliff for one hundred and sixty days. When dug out it weighed but forty pounds, and was extremely emaciated, but clean and white. The animal had nibbled the wood of the sty, and eaten some loose chalk. Lizards, especially the newt, have been found imbedded in chalk-rock apparently dead, but have reassumed living action on exposure to the atmosphere. On their detection in this state, the mouth is usually closed with a glutinous substance so tenaciously, that they are often suffocated in their efforts to extricate themselves from confinement. Toads have been repeatedly discovered in a similar situation, imbedded in blocks of stone or in the very heart of trees. Dr. Edwards, a

learned physiologist, has ascertained that blocks of mortar and heaps of sand possess sufficient porosity to admit enough air to support the life of reptiles; but they all perish if immersed in water or mercury, or when surrounded by an exhausted receiver. The duration of existence of the amphibials of the Batrachian family, when plunged in water, depends in a great measure on its temperature. They die speedily if the water be lower than thirty-two degrees Fahrenheit, or higher than one hundred and eight degrees; and the longest duration of life is under thirty-two degrees.

How can we account for these anomalies? Various solid substances are known to proceed from invisible elementary principles. Do water and air contain them? Metallic stones of large volume fall from the air: how are they produced? whence come they? How vain and feeble are our pursuits, when the vanity of science seeks to penetrate into the arcana of nature; searching and endeavouring to account for the causes of causation! What absurd and impertinent hypotheses have not been broached on scholastic benches! They remind us of an anecdote related of the old Parisian Academy, when one of its sapient members read a voluminous memoir to prove that tides were provided by the Creator for the purpose of bringing vessels in and out of harbour; when one of the Encyclopedian wits gravely observed, that he had no doubt of the fact, since he had discovered, after unceasing and laborious research, that noses were made for the purpose of wearing spectacles!

Although total abstinence from food for any length of time, excepting with hibernating animals, is a wondrous phenomenon, yet it is singular how little aliment is necessary for the purpose of sustaining life, and even health. Many instances of a frugality bordering upon

starvation are known. The most economical housekeeper on record was Roger Crabb, the Buckinghamshire hermit, who allowed himself three farthings a week.

Dr. Gower, of Chelmsford, had a patient who lived for ten years on a pint of tea daily, now and then chewing half a dozen raisins and almonds, but without swallowing them; once a month, by way of a treat, she ate a morsel of bread the size of a nutmeg.

The late Duke of Portland, after a long illness, during which he was attended by Dr. Warren, lived on bread and water for six weeks, at the expiration of which he was allowed *one boiled smelt*. Numerous persons have been known to live to old age, in perfect health, who never used animal food or wine; such was Dr. Hecquet, the Sangrado of Lesage, who published a curious treatise on fasting in Lent: Paris, 1709.

The following lines were written on a man named Offley:—

"Offley three dishes had of daily roast;
An egg, an apple, and the third a toast.

Most unquestionably, if this Offley was not a man of hard labour, or who took much exercise, this diet, scanty as it may appear, would have been quite sufficient to support life, for his fare was sumptuous compared to the diet prescribed by St. Theresa to her Carmelite nuns, and which consisted of one egg, herb-soup, with wormwood ashes and aloes. However, in regard to the wondrous fasting of various hermits and holy men, we must take their histories *cum grano salis*. They clearly belonged to two classes—enthusiasts or impostors: enthusiasm, which is little short of lunacy, enables the monomaniac to endure starvation with ease; and as to impostors, it is probable that, like Friar Tuck, they had a *bonne bouche* in a corner of their cells.

THE COMMON FLIRT.

Most writers, in discussing the matter of flirts, divide them into three classes,—the intellectual, the sentimental, and the common. The first is very generally praised; the second invariably demands and obtains pity from all writers and beholders; while the third is almost always cast aside, after a passing remark, as utterly unworthy of any notice whatever. And this treatment of the latter I am inclined to regard as eminently just, if only the intrinsic merit and deserts of this class are to be noted; since a flirtation, after their mode, is essentially animal in its conception and execution, as is the function of walking, requiring no mental exertion, and as easily performed by an idiot as by one in full possession of all the faculties. Yet in another aspect it is exceedingly improper, since, being in general devoid of an overplus of judgment, persons belonging to this class are liable to regard this neglect as a tacit approval of their conduct, at least expressive of a belief that their course is of certainty harmless, both to themselves and to those before whom they cast off their dignity.

In order to counteract this error, so exceedingly natural for persons of their mental calibre, I set myself, with proper solemnity and due deliberation, elaborately to discourse concerning the folly of indiscriminate flirtation, more especially as we see it exemplified daily on the streets and at windows.

A gentleman, while at a dinner party, was asked by some one for his opinion concerning women. "Women are facts," was the laconic reply. An explanation being demanded, he stated, somewhat elliptically, that "Facts are stubborn things, therefore women are facts."

Having long since become convinced by actual observation, as well as by experience, that the principle involved in his answer was perfectly true, I had almost determined never to write concerning any foible or folly of woman, lest my words might prove to be as wisdom cast to the four quarters of heaven from the centre of the Great Sahara, bringing forth no fruit, or producing no effect; or my labour be as effectual as it would be to command the mountains to be removed and cast into the sea, while there is no faith to support

the command. However, having carefully considered the Scripture command, "Cast thy bread upon the waters," &c., and being firmly persuaded that, in discussing the folly of the day, I run no greater risk of mental waste than the Egyptians did of physical, I shall untie my bag of morality and cast the seed wide-spread over the troubled waters of female public opinion, waiting patiently for fruit, nothing doubting but that, very many days hence, I may possibly find it.

I am the more especially impelled to this work by the fact that this evening, as I sat at my window, I saw two young ladies, living opposite to me, gesticulating violently, and apparently accusing each other of some fearful crime, accompanying the gesticulations and mutual recriminations with the most terrific distortions. Meanwhile, during the whole operation, they were casting sidelong glances over their shoulders and through their parasols at something, which I afterwards discovered to be two most unpromising and unprepossessing individuals, enveloped in the uniforms of army officers. I had not seen any previous part of the performance, but very naturally imagined that one or both of these young women had flaunted a handkerchief in the faces of these officers, at the same time bestowing upon them a most benignant smile, accompanied by a wink of most intimate acquaintance; whereupon the individuals so addressed, having perhaps nothing else to divert their attention, followed them homeward, hoping, no doubt, yet scarcely daring, to initiate an acquaintance.

The ladies evidently desired to open negotiations; so did the officers, but both seemed timid. At length, after many agonizing shakes of the handkerchief, and after settling the quarrel between themselves, the former induced the latter to approach, and they spoke one with another. They laughed and blushed, and blushed and laughed, as they instanced the peculiarities of the weather and recounted many other atmospheric phenomena, equally rare and curious. As there seemed to be mutual satisfaction, the ladies no doubt favoured the young gentlemen with their names, and these in return gave the names by which they would wish to be known on all such occasions. Then, having, as a natural

consequence, received an invitation to call and consider themselves in all respects as at home, the officers, with bows which would have cast a dancing-master into spasms, took their departure, highly delighted, and the ladies, after vainly seeking a commendatory smile from me, retired into the house, evidently gratified with the seductive power of their personal attractions, while I was left to my reflections.

Although the whole affair was ludicrous in the extreme, yet, as one considered the distant as well as the more immediate effects of such an act, or rather of a series of such acts, a feeling of sadness necessarily worked its way into the mind, and overcame any sense of the ludicrous which had been awakened. I could not avoid the suggestion that, perhaps unwittingly, these young women were thus preparing themselves to play, in a lower sphere, their parts. Thoughtlessly they compromise their reputation, their honour, and their self-respect; they lay themselves open to calumny, to suspicion, and to the intrigue of base, designing men, into whose power they thus recklessly cast themselves without reserve.

I would not be so uncharitable as to impute an intentionally improper motive to any considerable portion of those who engage in indiscriminate flirtation; or, as I may perhaps better term it, a public exhibition of their lack of modesty and the other traits so characteristic of the true woman. I would rather regard by far the greater number as influenced by some foolish delusion concerning its effects, or by the pernicious example of some acquaintance, or by exuberance of spirits, untempered or unrestrained by the exercise of judgment. But that many, defective in the very elements of modesty and true self-respect, in their very nature depraved, and in their influence destructive, enter heartily into these random coquetties, with full knowledge of the fearful and inevitable results of such a practice, no doubt may for a moment be entertained. Among these the chief incentives to such conduct are a perverted desire for notoriety and a morbid desire to appear untrammelled by the conventionalities of society. But all alike are blind and indifferent to the consequences of their folly, and seemingly rush with settled determination into the pit yawning to receive them.

Although extremely trivial, and far beneath the grade of any well-disciplined

mind, this habit of flirtation is so intensely fascinating that even the strongest organizations, when fairly drawn into the net, find extrication a matter of the greatest difficulty. Its whole tendency is grovelling, and so powerfully and rapidly does it work that the mind, though it were before ever so polished and refined, soon loses the nobility which formerly characterized it, then no longer delights in cultivated pursuits, and at length, becoming deprived of its power through lack of proper exercise, necessarily lapses into a state of almost imbecile dulness and sloth.

The desire for true mental enjoyment, the power to derive pleasure from instructive reading, and the anxiety for intellectual conversation are destroyed, while gossip and trifling conversations concerning some well-formed, though hare-brained youth, so far lacking in self-respect as to regard their improper as well as indiscreet advances, occupy their place and assist in causing mental debility. Not merely is the mental power diminished, but the moral tone is in great measure lost, and the tastes and desires become depraved, so that the woman, formerly elegant in her manner, and claiming respect from her friends, is now bold and crude in her customs, in many cases even becoming accustomed to the use of cant phrases. She is no longer desirous of healthful mental food, but seeks heating, unwholesome compounds, such as worthless, trashy novels, which will as certainly produce mental and moral dyspepsia, as a continued series of heavy dinners will produce physical indigestion.

By a continued use of these novels, and a persistent disregard of the requirements of modesty, the standard of morality becomes debased, and the pitiable victim of the baneful practice at length casts off honour and self-respect as useless encumbrances in her discourse, or, at best, as worthless natural accidents. She willingly becomes, as it were, the fragile toy with which idlers may consume in heedless frivolity the time, of which Nature, by some curious mishap, seems to have given them too much. She is made the topic of club-room conversations, and becomes the convenient butt of many a coarse jest. She destroys and averts from herself that respect which all honourable young men entertain for women, and brings upon herself the loathing and contempt of her own sex. Should she escape the intrigues of unprincipled men,

she in most cases will either die unmarried, or, as a last resort, accept some person upon whom, in her more prosperous days, she would scarcely have deigned to spit with contempt. In either case she will live or die a modern pillar of salt, a fearful warning to thoughtless young women, crying out to all passers-by to avoid the path of flirtation; for, truly, it is to all hopes of future usefulness and happiness the valley of the shadow of death, filled with horrid pits, with gins and snares, gorged with the blasted reputations of many who have gone before, now waiting to swallow up both wary and unwary, and from which but few come forth with honour and reputation unscathed.

Young men are not to be "caught" by flirtation, as many a silly girl imagines; many young men heed the advances of young women merely to destroy them; some, to drown cares or unpleasant remembrances; others, from a morbid sense of politeness; while others regard them from corrupt and dishonourable motives. But young men who thus dance attention on these young women do not intend to marry them, for who could trust a flirt? Her affections are fleeting as riches, and may at any time take to themselves wings and fly away, leaving their hypothetical possessor in a sad state of perturbation and dissatisfaction, fully convinced that there is nothing new under the sun, and that all the old is vanity. For this cause young men have a very reasonable unwillingness to risk their happiness with a flirt, and more especially with one of the common grade. I doubt much whether there be one young man this day, possessing a modicum of common sense, who, rather than marry a woman given to flir-

tation, would not willingly marry a person ignorant of every household duty, without utility, a mere doll, useful only for show, and be satisfied, if she be only possessed of honourable feeling and self-respect.

If girls just entering womanhood could be induced to heed the warnings of those who have sunken hopelessly before them; if they would regard the scoffs and derision heaped upon the heads of flirts who have preceded them; or observe the contempt with which such creatures are regarded by true women, who think themselves formed by God for a higher and nobler purpose than merely to play the shallow, immodest, petty flirt, or willingly debase themselves so as to become the despised laughing-stock of brainless, unprincipled idlers; if they could only perceive that they gain no respect from those to whom they recklessly exhibit their moral deformity; and if the present generation of immoral, licentious novels, almost rivalling in destructiveness those of a century ago, were blotted out of existence, I apprehend that the women of the rising generation would be freed from many of the trials and the effects of indiscretion, from which many worthy women of our day have suffered. The mechanic's home would then be cheered by a wife, a true helpmeet, willing to suit herself to the exigencies of her situation; apparent immorality would greatly decrease, and the lying sneers of Byron and his licentious coterie, finding no proof among women, would no longer be regarded, so that women would regain the respect and honour due to their sex, which, by the folly of a few and the energetic perversions of the devil, has been averted from all.

IMAGINATIVE WRITINGS.

"I would not, for any quantity of gold, part with the wonderful tales I have retained from my earliest youth, or have met with in my progress through life."—LUTHER.

It is one thing for some persons to feel astonished at the patience which can read, and at the perseverance that can write, fictitious narratives, and all the more so at the extremely lengthy or sensational ones; but it is quite another thing to know why these productions have been

the delight of millions in the ages which are past, and will continue to be so for ages to come; and also how it happens there is scarcely any branch of literature that has allured more readers, or excited more writers, than the imaginative.

It is the most ancient kind of writing. The Hebrew penman pictured truth to the minds of the people, arrested their attention, and communicated lessons to them through the medium of the imagi-

nation, by fancied illustrations drawn from passing events and surrounding objects. The falling leaf became an ideal picture that was formed to remind them of their mortality; the withered grass and fading flower of their frailty, &c. This mode of instruction was pleasing, because it entertained the mind with representations of scenes and events familiar to their conceptions, and of which they could all equally judge whether they were well described.

The great Teacher himself—the Master of the Imaginative Art, of whom it was predicted that, when he appeared on our stage, he would instruct the people by parables—actually and purposely realized this prediction in his imaginary narratives, from operations in nature and scenes in social life—to wit: the parable of the Sower, the Barren Fig Tree, the Prodigal Son, the Ten Virgins, the Dives and Lazarus, &c. From each of these he pictured incidents which, to others, would have passed unnoticed or unimproved, but in the hands of such a master—the author of the faculty itself—they were made subservient to the higher purposes of truth, virtue, and propriety of life.

So, also, of the writer of the Book of the Revelations, which may be considered another instance of the power of representing things absent to one's self or others; and, at the same moment, it proves the antiquity of ideal narratives.

In the course of time, the surrender of the mind to works of the imagination was the great character of the intellect of Europe—so much so, that, by the tenth or twelfth century, the pleasure received from literature of this kind was so general that it became not merely the employment of the human fancy and a first-class intellectual amusement, but it constituted almost the only reading of the day. Hence, all sorts of romantic and supernatural fictions were popular, and mingled with everything and influenced everybody.

It is easy here to wonder at some of our ancestors, and one is almost ready to reproach their memories for being so fond of ideal writings, and opening their hearts to the admission of these fanciful conceptions and compositions of the most fabulous character; but before we attempt to cast anything approaching to moral censure upon them, we must be quite sure that we should have acted otherwise under their condition and circumstances; for the feeling which in-

dulged in what Lord Bacon calls "*the shews of things accommodated to the desires of the mind*," was not only natural, but proved auxiliary to improvement and contributory to happiness.

The same reason why they were pleased, still continues to operate upon the men and women of the present day, and will descend to future generations: viz, moral sympathy is awakened by narrative and fiction; the mind is instructed by intelligibly drawn and fanciful pictures of life and manners; and that romances, novels, and tales are so many utopias, in which the writers try to paint or to inculcate something which they consider to be more useful, more delightful, or more interesting than the world they live in, than the characters they survey, the events they experience, or the position they occupy in life.

The taste for fictitious narratives and the imaginative art, which became general about the twelfth century, reached its culminating point in England with such minds as Milton and his *Paradise Lost*, with Johnson and his *Rasselas*, with Pope and his *Essay on Man*, with Shakespeare, Bunyan, Cowper, &c. &c., whose conceptions are faithful, instructive, and amusing. They please by the choice of their subjects; they frequently speak to the heart by the situation of their heroes, who are taken as the basis of their story, and on whose foundation the artist raises what superstructures he pleases; and they possess the power of transferring their own feelings to the reader. Nor is it too much to say that a large portion of mankind derive much of their moral impressions and opinions from the fictitious narratives which they read, hear, or talk about.

All ideal writing which is not merely sensational, that does not pervert truth, nor violate good taste and decency, which does not praise nor paint up vice and vicious characters, seeking to render them imitable, acts beneficially as well as pleasingly on the mind. It renders reading popular among the people. Being colloquial in style, it is easy of comprehension. It provides an agreeable occupation for a leisure hour. It is an accession to the intellect of the day, and makes literature one of the necessities of life.

Supposing this line to be drawn, and this distinction strictly observed, those ably-written novels which are intended more especially for the upper, educated classes, as well as that rapidly increasing

series of tales which issues weekly from the press, so popular with the lower ranks of the people, may all be read with advantage, for this simple reason, that in the least intellectual of them frequent passages are met with and original strokes of wit found which delight the fancy, excite natural feeling, and gratify the cultivated taste.

Just as the natural light in passing through the atmosphere strikes upon creation, thereby rendering objects visible, so this imaginative light is continued on to our own day, and brilliantly reflected by the different popular romancers, all working together to one good result, in presenting ideal pictures of some religious truth, some renowned characters, or some social grievance to be redressed.

With such high authorities and long usage on its side, may we not only say of written or oral imaginings, but of all forms of appeal to the human fancy, whether in painting, sculpture, poetry, novels, or tales, where they are not low, obscene, demoralizing, that they are highly agreeable to the intellectual faculties, act beneficially on the mind and heart, and contribute some little to the sunshine of life? And picturesque writings do this in proportion to the *beau ideal* of the author, and his aim being at whatever is good and imitable.

The author of any of our best-approved novels or tales may or may not be the subject of just notions of the possible excellence of human nature; but it is both interesting and gratifying to discover, that in exact proportion to his preconceived imaginings of attainable excellence, his love of self-reputation as a writer is continually prompting him to try to paint or to invest his leading personages with the same degree of excellence which he himself possesses. This constant endeavour to exhibit the *beau ideal* of his own conceptions is always underlying the general plan, although other characters of inferior qualities occasionally crop up during its execution and development. Our best novel writers, in every age, as well as all our most approved contributors of tales, prove the truth of this remark; and it is from this habit, which they could scarcely avoid, that society has been so

much benefited. The appearance, here and there, of ideal writers of the demoralizing, sensational school, does not any more tell against my general argument, than does base money depreciate the standard value of the legal coin, but rather otherwise; for if there were no real or genuine green-backs there would be no counterfeits; so, the occasional appearance of authors with corrupt minds, writing corrupt works, is no exception to the remark, that our best novel or tale writers put forth the best minds they have, display the best feelings they possess, and draw the best characters that they are accustomed to conceive or imagine.

The wholesale objections which are brought against reading imaginative works are, that it is a waste of time and money, that they give false views of life, and that such productions, considered in a moral point of view, are of the worst kind. If this be true, it is the fault of the artist, not of his art. The testimony which Martin Luther has borne to the beneficial influence of ideal writings upon himself, is direct evidence of their improving tendency, where their authors' state of mind and conceptions have been capable of benefiting society. Admitting that truth, and morality, and propriety of life may be suggested to the mind through the medium of the imagination, is it too much to say that our best writers in this line have a claim to be considered amongst the moral instructors of their countrymen? If their own conceptions be good and excellent, what a highly gifted faculty it must be to produce goodness and excellence in others! So far, then, from the race of imaginative writers being injurious to society, by giving to the mind habits of feeble, confused, and desultory thought and action, and so far from the writers of our most approved popular tales representing personages and scenes the very antipodes of what we meet with in the walks of every-day life, we say such writers are pursuing a vocation which improves their fellows, increases their happiness, and promotes their virtue, thus disclosing the reason why imaginative writings please.

THE FISHERMAN'S DAUGHTER.

IN this paper I propose to trace the main currents of two lives, those of Louis Henri Joseph de Bourbon, Prince of Condé, the last of that illustrious line, and of Sophia Dawes, daughter of an indigent fisherman, and for some years barmaid at the Fountain Inn, West Cowes, Isle of Wight. Widely apart as were those two existences, they became blended when Louis de Bourbon had reached to about midway between the cradle and the grave, and remained fatally intermingled till the Prince suddenly descended to the tomb. Whether by his own act, or pushed therein by the fisher's daughter, is one of the most debateable of undiscovered crimes.

Louis Henri Joseph, Duc de Bourbon, was not, it must be confessed, a very brilliant result of the long train of ancestral light descending down from the days of Hugh Capet. The richest, grandest nobility of blood may, I suppose, become thinned, impoverished after running its course through nine or ten centuries. At all events, the last of the Condés appears to have been a weak, flighty, feather-headed young gentleman; fond of the show and glare of military life, having plenty of mere animal courage, but incapable of submitting to the discipline essential to the formation of a true soldier. At fifteen he was dazzled by the beauty of the Princess Louise of Orleans—a boyish fancy dignified by the name of love. The rejection of his suit by the father of the princess of course inflamed that boyish fancy, and he prevailed upon that volatile young lady, to use a mild phrase, to elope with him from the convent in which she had been placed, and contract a private marriage. The only issue of the unhappy union was Henri Antoine Duc d'Enghien, murdered in the fosse of Vincennes, by order of First Consul Napoleon Bonaparte, on the night of the 20th of March, 1804.

The Princess had been a wife but a few weeks when she plunged with entire abandon and gaiety of heart into a vortex of intrigue. One with her relation, the Count d'Artois, afterwards saintly Charles X., led to permanent results. At a masked ball, at the Tuileries, she, in a transport of jealousy at seeing her paramour, D'Artois, with a lady on his arm, seized his hand, and attempted a remon-

strance. The count, not at the moment aware who it was that so rudely accosted him, snatched off her mask, exposing Madame la Duchesse de Bourbon and Princess of Condé to the derision of the assembly. The young husband was bound, according to the fashionable opinions of the day, to resent the insult by sending a challenge to the Count D'Artois. He did so; the two heroes met in the Bois de Boulogne, fought a harmless duel, shook hands, breakfasted together—and the sensible finale of the affair was the immediate legal separation of the weak prince from his frail wife. The prince's marriage was the subject of a comedy entitled, "L'Amoureux de Quinze Ans."

De Bourbon consoled himself. The family was immensely rich, and, with the exception of assisting at the failure of the magnificent and invincible French and Spanish navies to damage Gibraltar, led a very gay life indeed for about seventeen years. The muttering thunder of the revolutionary tempest, soon to burst in chainless fury over France, startled him into heedful seriousness. Immense sums of money were transmitted to England, and in July, 1789, the Prince de Condé, with his father and son, quitted the French capital for that of Belgium. Though the prince took the wise precaution not to expose himself to the adverse chances of the struggle already begun between the privileged classes and the people of France, he so little appreciated the terrific force of the revolution, as to believe that it could be easily put down by a few whiffs of grape shot. He remained constant to that opinion even after the death of Louis XVI., joined the emigrants assembled at Coblenz, banded together to carry out the Partition project of crushing the plebeians of France, uprisen by millions, with a few hundred sabres and bayonets wielded by the arms of a long-since effete noblesse, and heralded by the oriflamme blazoned with their historic, detested names. The command in chief of the illustrious army was given the prince's father: he himself was named general of cavalry, with his son D'Enghien as second in command. The ludicrous enterprise was seriously attempted—extinguished as soon as

begun—the general of cavalry received a smart sabre-cut on his right hand, had his collar bone broken at the combat at Bertheim—and esteemed himself fortunate in having fared no worse. Prince, father, and son, took flight without delay; the father to Russia, the prince to England, and the son to Ettenheim, in the neutral duchy of Baden.

The Prince of Condé settled, after a while, at Wanstead, Essex. It was there he received the news of the atrocious midnight murder of his son, the Duc d'Enghien. The immediate effect upon the impulsive prince was to cause him to at once throw up his ruralizing projects and plunge into the coarse gaieties, the sensuous allurements of London life. In the green-room of Covent Garden theatre, to which he was introduced by his Royal Highness the Duke of Clarence, he met his fate—Sophia Dawes, under the yoke of whose fascinations of person and manners the last of the Condés immediately passed, never through the long future years to be for one hour relieved therefrom; though in his latter days the imperious woman rendered it almost intolerable. Presenting the bribe of his immense wealth, the Prince of Condé entreated the humble fisherman's tainted daughter to place herself under his sole protection. Sophia Dawes consented, upon conditions; one of which was that the nature of their intimacy should be scrupulously concealed—that it should, in fact, be quietly given out she was a natural child of Condé by an English lady, from whom misunderstandings and jealousies had too long estranged him.

It will be necessary to revert with some minuteness to the foregone history of the beautiful actress. If that were not done it would be impossible for the reader to accurately appreciate the mysterious circumstances attendant upon the violent death, in 1830, of the Prince of Condé; to judge for him or herself where the great axe should have fallen; or whether, after all, Sophia Dawes ought not to be absolved by a more reliable tribunal than a French court of justice, the verdict of which, if adverse to her, would have seriously compromised the Orleans dynasty, whose chief had just before sprung from the Paris barricades into the vacated throne of the elder Bourbons.

Sophia was the second child of John Dawes, originally from some part of the seacoast of Devonshire; but settled, since he was a very young man and a

bachelor, near Yarmouth, Isle of Wight, nearly opposite the Hampshire borough town of Lymington. He was a fisherman, and his skill and industry just enabled him to keep the wolf from the door; nothing beyond that. He married, early in life, Jane Somers, captivated by her good looks. She was not the best of housewives; and when she died, soon after the birth of their ninth child, Susannah, her decease was not, in a material sense, any great loss. The family, so numerous, all passed away in early infancy except Sophia and two sisters. She herself was vigorously toned, robustly healthy, as she was beautiful and quick-witted. Her youth-beauty has been spoken of as something marvellous; enduring beauty, too, which, like that of the Lady Olivia, could stand wind and weather, so that when, at past fifty, she flaunted in the court circles of Paris, she looked nearly twenty years younger, and was esteemed to be one of the handsomest women of the time. The young girl's beauty, her sparkling vivacity, and sharp, penetrating intellect attracted the notice of a clergyman resident in Yarmouth—whether holding a living there or not, is not stated. I should say an anxious commiserative interest was awakened in the good man's breast, knowing, as he did, how almost inevitably fatal to a girl so circumstanced were the advantages with which she had been so lavishly gifted. He was desirous of seeing her settled in life as the wife of a sufficiently well-to-do honest man. This would have been easy enough had the girl been willing; but ambitious Sophia could not stoop to mate with farmers or tradesmen. When she was in her seventeenth year, and barmaid at the Fountain inn, the tempter came; a wealthy foreign nobleman, struck, dazzled by her beauty and brightness of intellect. He would seem to have conceived for her a real affection; and was probably sincere in his promise to make her his wife as soon as her education should be perfected at his charge. Sophia believed, or affected to believe, that promise, placed herself under his protection, and received an expensive education at some of the first scholastic establishments for ladies, in London. She had a turn for the stage—a liking for, not a genius for acting. At all events, her theatrical powers, if she possessed any, were not stimulated by the sharp spur of necessity. Her protector, though he declined making her his wife, kept her in great splendour

at Turnham Green, so that her not many appearances at Covent Garden must be counted amongst the *délassements* of her depraving life.

The charge of the protection of her precious self being duly transferred from her first admirer—not perhaps so ardent a lover of the finished woman of the world as he had been of the fresh, young, joyous barmaid—it occurred to the lady that her reception in “society” would be facilitated by marriage—open, public marriage—with a man of rank, whom her beauty and manifold other attractions, inclusive of almost any sum as dowry, which she had only to ask for and have, might induce to make her a countess or a baroness. A gentleman in the suite of the Prince de Condé was the representative of a noble but impoverished family. This gentleman, the Baron de Feuchères, was not only a brave frank soldier, but of almost childlike credulity. He measured the good faith and truthfulness of others by his own. He was, moreover, under great obligations to the prince. Him Sophia Dawes fixed upon to be her husband. It was not difficult for such a woman to excite emotions of tenderness in the breast of such a man towards the enchanting daughter, as he fully believed her to be, of his princely patron; and after a very brief *pourparler* Sophia Dawes became Madame la Baronne de Feuchères. Her object gained, Madame la Baronne was not careful to conceal the cruel deception she had been guilty of towards her husband. It would, indeed, have been impossible long to do so. So she frankly told De Feuchères that she was the prince's mistress, not his child.

The astonished, indignant soldier left her in disgust, and never saw her again. The obligations he was under to, and the hereditary respect he felt for, the Prince de Condé, prevented him, however, from making any public exposure. This, too, had no doubt been calculated upon by the cunning lady.

The overthrow of Napoleon was the restoration of the Condés to all their possessions, dignities, honours, and pensions, with the addition of a very large share of the millions voted by the Bourbon Chambers to indemnify the returned Royalists for the losses they had incurred during their exile from France. In 1818 the prince's father died, and he, with Madame la Baronne de Feuchères, settled permanently on one of his magnificent

domains—that of Chantilly, the gift of Louis XIV. to the great Condé, and one of the finest estates in France. The magnificent mansion, built upon an artificial foundation in the centre of a beautiful lake, is encircled by vast grounds, laid out in gardens, islands, grottoes, rivers, hunting-fields, not much less, including the grand old forest of Chantilly, than ten thousand acres.

It was at Chantilly that the cook, Vattel, played the Roman fool by falling upon his own sword for no other better reason than the non-arrival of a basket of sea-fish required for the due completion of the king's dinner—*le grand monarque* being at the time on a visit there.

Madame de Feuchères, at once insinuating and imperious, caressing and haughty, completely governed the infatuated old man; to whom her will—much as he at times writhed under the yoke—was the law of his abject life.

The ambition, the avarice of Sophia Dawes could not be satisfied with the position to which she had attained, with the wealth of which she had the virtually absolute control. True; but the prince was growing old, was feeble for his age—his death might at any moment cast her down from that giddy height. It was essential that he should make his will; bequeathing to her his estates of Chantilly, Saint Leu, Boissy, the forest of Enghien, &c., &c., and of course his personals—reckoned by millions. Which done, “he would, in the unhappy event of surviving him, assure a less unhappy future for his poor Sophie.” As the prince had no nearer blood-relatives than some distant cousins of the Rohan Rochefort family, he had a legal right, notwithstanding the French law of *partage*, to make such a will; which will could only be invalidated by proof that it was made under coercion or undue influence.

The prince complied with Madame la Baronne's request, command rather; and the will, as settled by her, was drawn up and executed in the year 1825; Condé being in his seventieth, Madam de Feuchères in her fortieth year.

The future of “poor Sophie” appeared to be assured beyond all chance of wreck; and she was content to wait, in the practical possession of the prince's revenues, for the time when, by the course of nature, she should be legally seised of them.

A message sent her by a friend awoke her from that dream of security. The fact of such a will having been executed had come to the knowledge of the Princes de Rohan, who had been advised by M. Hennequin, and other eminent members of the Paris bar, that it was doubtful such a will would stand, as proofs of the undue influence of a foreign woman, living in a state of concubinage with an infatuated man nearly double her age, would no doubt be readily obtainable. The Rohans, so advised, had been repeatedly heard to declare that if determined litigation could annul the succession of Madame de Feuchères to the estates, she should never take possession of them.

Madame de Feuchères was greatly alarmed, and with good reason. Undue influence! Of course what the law would call undue influence could easily be proved. Every servant in the establishment, every frequent visitor knew that the prince was under her dominion. She had accidentally seen a letter from his almoner, the Abbé Pélier, in which she read, "that the prince's fondness for Madame de Feuchères, though always provident, was marked by a sort of terror."

The peril was patent; indisputable. How might it be conjured? Lawyers could do nothing more for her than they had done. The situation at the prince's death would be this: she, a foreigner, not exactly of immaculate character, would have to fight the battle of a grossly unjust will in the French courts with the influential Princes of Rohan. She had heard much of the unimpeachable integrity of French legal dignitaries, and knew nothing herself to the contrary. But under the peculiar circumstances—in such a case as that—like Lord Eldon, Sophy Dawes obstinately doubted.

Might it not, however, be possible to oppose influence by a more powerful influence? The Orleans family, whom the prince detested notwithstanding he had been worried into standing godfather by proxy to one of its scions, the Duc d'Aumale, were, she knew, eagerly desirous of obtaining a share, the larger the better, of the large Condé estates. That was a very powerful family; the influence of the De Rohans was as nothing compared with theirs. There were persistent rumours floating about in the public mind that the crown of France was far likelier to descend upon the head of the Duke of

Orleans than to circle the baby brow of the Count de Chambord. Could she not bind up the interests of that powerful family with her own? The repugnance of De Bourbon to the younger branch of the royal house, for no other reason than because a Duke of Orleans voted for the death of Louis XVI., was absurd.

The prince could not resist her importunities. A new will must be made devising the Chantilly estate to the Duke d'Aumale, and constituting him residuary legatee. A painful sacrifice to part with Chantilly, no doubt; still, by attempting to grasp all, she might lose all. That consideration was decisive.

It was necessary before broaching the subject to the Prince of Condé that she should ascertain if the Orleans family would enter into partnership with Madame de Feuchères, *ci-devant* Sophia Dawes, in the matter. All doubt upon that point was speedily dispelled. In reply to her letter, the Duchess of Orleans, afterwards Queen Amélie, wrote as follows:—

"I am very much touched, Madame, by what you tell me of your anxiety to bring about a result which you look upon as likely to fulfil the wishes of Monsieur le Duc de Bourbon, and believe me, that if I have the happiness to find my son become his adopted child, you will receive from us at all times and under all circumstances that support for you and yours which you are pleased to demand, and of which a mother's gratitude will be for you a sure guarantee."

The Duke of Orleans wrote himself to Madame de Feuchères, to say "how glad it made him to believe that the glorious name of Condé would be borne by one of his sons."

This preliminary condition of success achieved (1829), Madame de Feuchères set to work with her doting lover. Strange, that though the prince had willingly consented to make a will devising all he possessed to her, the proposition by Madame de Feuchères that he should make a new will diverting the estates of Chantilly and other demesnes from her to the Duc d'Aumale was received by him with the utmost repugnance. Did the old man divine her thought, and had he secretly hugged himself in the conviction that at his decease "poor Sophie" would find herself compelled to compromise with his blood relatives, and the Condé estates consequently remain in the family? Possibly.

At all events, he for a long time resisted all Madame's blandishments, threats, personal violence—it came to that. One day, the 29th of August, 1829, M. de Surval, his steward, heard loud talking in the billiard-room of the Palais Bourbon, Paris. Entering, he found the prince in a frightful passion.

"Only see," remarked Madame de Feuchères, "into what a passion Monseigneur puts himself and others without a cause. Try and calm him."

"Yes, madame," rejoined the prince, "it is horrible, atrocious, thus to put a knife to my throat to make me do a thing I abhor." Then, seizing her hand, he added, with a significant gesture, "Well, then, plunge the knife in at once; plunge it!"

A few hours afterwards the prince said to the same M. de Surval—

"My death is the only thing they look for. Once they have obtained from me what they desire, my life may be in danger."

Madame la Baronne continuing inflexible, the new will, drawn up by Dupin the elder, was signed the very next day, August 30th, 1829. In one of his gratulatory notes to Madame Feuchères, his Royal Highness the Duke of Orleans wrote—"You are the guardian angel of your august friend."

The guardian angel, if the guarded prince is to be believed, exercised her functions in a very singular manner.

"Madame de Feuchères," said he, addressing M. Obez, a gentleman of Chantilly, and pointing to one of his eyes, which was bleeding, "Madame de Feuchères is a wicked woman. She has struck me. See in what a state she has left me."

It is true, that only a few minutes before the prince told Manoury, a confidential attendant, that the accident occurred by his striking himself against the night-table.

Manoury remarked,

"That was strange, as the night-table was not so high as the bedstead."

The same day the prince expressed a wish that Manoury should sleep at the door of his bedroom.

"Why not Lecompte, your *valet-de-chambre*?" replied Manoury.

"Oh, no, no; that cannot be."

Lecompte had been introduced into the establishment by Madame de Feuchères.

The Revolution of 1830 broke out; the incident tumult and violence quickly

passed away, and when order reigned once again in Paris, it was seen that the grand achievement of the three glorious days was the substitution of Louis Philippe upon throne of the Charlemagne, in the place of Charles X.!

The new king was not unmindful, amidst the exultation of his great success, of lesser God-or-devil-sends. Queen Amélie arrived at St. Leu with the star of the Legion of Honour for her august relative, the Prince of Condé. The "honour" enraged him. "They want to make me one of their peers," he exclaimed in De Surval's presence. "Never, never! My God, shall I ever see England again?"

The will wrung from the Prince of Condé with so much difficulty might, of course, be at any time revoked, and Madame de Feuchères had no doubt it would be revoked if De Bourbon should succeed in withdrawing, as she believed he was plotting to do, from her surveillance. That was her great fear. There must have been another, or why had a carriage been stationed for some days, by her order, in a small village two leagues from St. Leu, between the forests of Montmorency and Lille Adam, the driver of which had orders to be ready to set off in the direction of England, as soon as certain unnamed persons appeared, and gave a concerted signal. That discovery was made by M. de Chouillot, the prince's *Capitaine de Chasse*, on the 25th of August, upon which day, moreover, it has been proved, says Louis Blanc, that Madame de Feuchères procured from Rothschild a bill on London for half-a-million.

The mode of flight first arranged between the prince and his faithful friends, Chouillot and Manoury, was, that an old *valet de chambre*, dressed in his master's clothes, should proceed round to Havre, to give De Bourbon the better chance of escaping by way of Switzerland. In pursuance of that plan Manoury was to have taken passports and a carriage and gone to wait for the prince at Moisselles. That, however, it was found, could not be done without its being talked of, and so coming to the knowledge of Madame de Feuchères. Such was the moral and mental thralldom in which the prince was held by this woman, that the notion of defying her usurped authority, and quitting France in open day, never appeared to have occurred to him. This is the more surprising, as the villagers of Saint Leu, who were as much attached to him

as they disliked Madame la Baronne, would at the slightest sign have soon settled with her creatures at the château had an attempt been made to forcibly detain him. The prince might also have suspected, that agents of the citizen king were not far off, and at Madame de Feuchères's orders. Be that as it may, a new scheme for flight was arranged with Chouillot, who came to Saint Leu on the evening of the 25th of August, and at night was secretly introduced by Manoury into the prince's chamber. That visit and its object, to enable De Bourbon to get out of Madame de Feuchères' reach, came by some means to the knowledge of that lady. There was a violent scene between her and the prince the next morning. The baroness went out and remained a long time absent. When she returned her anger had apparently passed away. The dinner went off quietly, and the prince played at whist with the baroness, Monsieur Lavillegoutier, and De Préjean, till nine o'clock; lost, but did not pay, saying, as he left the room, "To-morrow, to-morrow!"

The Prince de Condé's bedchamber was connected by a narrow passage with a waiting-room, which on one side opened upon a dressing-room, issuing upon the great corridor of the château. On the other side the waiting-room opened upon a private staircase, leading to a lobby which opened upon the apartments of Madame de Feuchères. From the foot of the private staircase ran a corridor, leading to an intermediate lobby, from which went off another corridor, along which were ranged the rooms of the Abbé Briant, Madame de Feuchères' secretary, of Lachaussé, *femme de chambre*, and a married couple, the Duprés, two of her especial servants. They lay directly under the prince's room, so that they could distinctly hear his voice. No noise seems to have been heard by them that night.

The prince had directed his valet Lecompte to call him as usual at eight o'clock. Precisely at that hour the valet knocked at the door of the dressing-room which opened upon the prince's chamber. That door he had locked the previous night. The other door led to another ante-room, which opened upon the private staircase before spoken of, the door of which, it was subsequently proved, had not been locked that night. But both chamber doors were fastened on the inside with an iron bar. No answer being returned to Lecompte's knocking, he

went and called M. Bonnie, the prince's physician. Again Lecompte knocked loudly, still no answer; and greatly alarmed, both physician and valet hastened to Madame de Feuchères. "I will go to him immediately," she said; "when he hears my voice he will reply." The baroness came out of her room but partially dressed, and hastened with them to the prince's chamber, not by the private staircase, which was much the shortest way, but along the grand corridor. This circumstance was the subject of much after comment. "Open the door," exclaimed Madame la Baronne; "it is I." No answer could be obtained; the alarm spread through the château; numerous servants came running to the spot, an iron bar was brought, a panel smashed in, and the room, which, the shutters being closed, was dark, entered. By the faint glimmer of a candle in the fireplace, almost entirely obscured by an iron screen, the prince's head was seen to be pressed against a window on the north side as if listening to some one without. Manoury opened a window on the east side, and it was then seen that the prince was suspended by the neck from an iron window-bar, with his feet just touching the floor—dead! All rushed into the chamber of death except Madame la Baronne, who dropped groaning into a chair in the dressing-room. When the almoner shortly afterwards arrived, he found her in the same place, but much recovered, and listening resignedly to M. Bonnie's words of consolation.

The prince was suspended by two handkerchiefs passed one within the other. There was no running noose, no pressure on the windpipe. The kerchief was so loose that Manoury easily passed his fingers between. The face was pale, not black, the tongue did not protrude, the hands were closed, the knees bent, the points of the toes touched the carpet, and all he need have done in his agony was to stand upon his feet. One of the servants similarly suspended himself and suffered no inconvenience. Another quite unaccountable circumstance was that the knot of the handkerchief was so skilfully and strongly tied, and with such force drawn through the bolt, that Romanzo, the prince's footman, had the greatest difficulty in loosening it. Now every one knew that the prince, in consequence of the sabre-cut he had received at the combat of Bertheim, across his right hand, could not even tie his shoe-strings,

and that the bow of his cravat had to be adjusted by his valet. The prince could only get out of bed by turning upon himself, as it were, pressing on the edge of the bed, so that a blanket had to be placed there in four folds to prevent his falling out. Yet the centre of the bed was found pressed down, the edge raised. His strong religious feelings, moreover, the little energy of his character, argued strongly against the supposition of suicide. These doubts, misgivings, were loudly uttered by Chouillot and Manoury. "Take care," exclaimed Madame de Feuchères; "take care how you use such language. It may compromise you with the king!" She herself lost not a moment in possessing herself of all the deceased's papers: "Only in the hope of finding amongst them some farewell letter from the man who loved her so." Both the chamber doors were, it has been stated, barred on the inside. This was thought to be decisive proof that there had been no foul play, till it was ascertained, by experiment, that the bar or bolt could be slipped from the outside easily.

Abbé Pélier, the prince's almoner, formed a very decided opinion upon the subject. The prince's heart, enclosed in a silver-gilt casket, was conveyed by him to Chantilly. Holding it up at the conclusion of some religious ceremony, the Abbé exclaimed—"The prince is innocent of his death in the sight of God."

Madame la Baronne having taken legal possession of everything at Saint Leu and Chantilly, hurried off to the Palais Bourbon, and for some time insisted that her niece, the daughter of one of her sisters who had married a French gentleman, Mademoiselle Flaissard, should sleep in her bedroom—the Abbé Briant in the immediately adjoining library.

Madame de Feuchères' nervous terrors soon passed away. She had long been a gambler at the Bourse, and now plunged with more avidity than ever into that exciting pastime. Report gave out that her success was immense, that she gained enormously. Her reception at the court of Louis Philippe was of the most brilliant kind. The Orleans family proved themselves very grateful, as they had promised they would, fully believing, we have no right to doubt, that she was innocent of compassing or consenting to the death of the last of the Condés. Admitting that, Madame de Feuchères was scarcely a person that one would suppose

a high moral king and queen would have delighted to honour.

One circumstance called forth not a little sarcastic remark. Evidence respecting the death of the Prince de Condé was being zealously collected by an active magistrate at Pontoise—M. de Flauproie. That active functionary was suddenly superannuated; and the office of judge, a favour he had long coveted, bestowed upon his son-in-law. The civil suit brought to annul the will by the Princes de Rohan was also decided in favour of the Duke d'Aumale and Madame de Feuchères. Whether played for foully or fairly, Madame la Baronne had certainly won the golden prize. Many scandalous stories were circulated. It was whispered that one of her accomplices, who had passed over to England, fleeced her at an enormous rate, as the price of his silence. Madame de Feuchères, to close the account once and for all, gave him rendezvous at Calais, she being accompanied by the Abbé Briant. The three dined together, soon after which the accomplice was seized with mortal illness, died, and was buried within eight-and-forty hours. These stories were, I suppose, malicious inventions.

Madame de Feuchères soon tired of the gay world of Paris, and the solemn verities of religion profoundly impressed her for the first time in her strange life. She was surrounded by grave priests, and before long was received into the Roman Catholic Church at Notre Dame de Lorette. She next gradually disposed of her splendid domains—Saint Leu, Montfontaine, Montmorency, and the Palais Bourbon. The sums realized were enormous, and many convents and chapels were erected and endowed by the pious baroness, where sad and solemn priests sing daily for the repose of the souls of Louis Henri Joseph de Bourbon, and of Madame la Baronne de Feuchères. It was believed she would have left the whole of her immense wealth to the Church. That expectation was disappointed. By her last will and testament, executed shortly before she left France, in 1840, she bequeathed nearly the whole of her property not devised to the Church, and which was not far short of a million sterling, to her niece. The journey to England appears to have been prompted by a wish to lay her bones there. After a brief visit to the Isle of Wight, she took up her residence in London, was seized with sudden illness in January

1841, died after but a few days' suffering, and was buried in accordance with her own request, without pomp or circumstance, in Harrow Cemetery. To her husband, the Baron de Feuchères, she bequeathed ten thousand pounds. He refused to accept the legacy. Odillon Barrot, one of the executors, accepted the office, but not the gift of four thousand pounds by which the nomination was accompanied. It was handed over

by him to an asylum for orphans in Paris.

The immense Condé property has been completely broken up and dispersed. The baroness disposed of her, the lion's share, before she left France, and the Duke d'Aumale was compelled, by a decree of Louis Napoleon, to sell Chantilly. It was disposed of by auction—the purchasers being two partners in an eminent London bank.

ELSIE'S RENUNCIATION.

FATES ripen fast in these days, and all that was happiest and hardest for me is over now. Years seem to have passed since June, and yet I can count the months on the fingers of one hand. Life had always run in an even current with me; my griefs no one could see; noteless agonies, none the less keen because sometimes fantastic. At first the world looked awkwardly to me: I was long in harmonizing. But as I grew older and gained confidence and occupation, a degree of happiness was mine. Perhaps if I had kept in my corner I might have crystallized into the historical, botanizing, serene specimen of ladyhood I was fast becoming at twenty-one. But Time's whirling soon placed me in the midst of the people of my little drama.

There was Morrison Deane, whom I had long known with the indifference of friendship, now to find him of kindred. He told me how long he had watched me, how he understood my undeveloped powers. I felt that out of all he knew he confided only in me. His sympathy made me proud. Slow natures sometimes kindle in a moment to silent flame; and if I had been slowly educating myself to the appreciation of this man, what matter? No need to dwell on it, I loved him.

Do you know the mystery? The subtle, indefinite uplifting of the whole nature, the abandonment of the first rapture, the slow and hard control of a new being. I was changed out of my own understanding. For the first time I apprehended the unutterable beauty of that attribute of Divinity. Then I first truly worshipped God.

The future lay then in mazy, shifting colours; in no day-reverie did I seek to find my fate. Girls are prone to deceive themselves, and fancy the friendship of their friend turning love-colour; but I did not falter but once, it was so easy. Aunt Felix and I had lived in our country home without a thought of change. We too were alone in the world, and were contented as two women ever can be. Suddenly the ancient maiden, a hundred times more youthful in her feelings than I, consented to enliven the solitude of a solemn, respectable widower, a man I should never have suspected. Then my friends took counsel on my affairs and decided I should be buried no longer, but take up my abode henceforth with my guardian and cousin James. So the house was dismantled, all my nooks and habits invaded, and all I was to commence my new life with was packed in three great trunks before me. The only time I was ungracious to Morrison Deane was that afternoon, when he walked in swinging his straw-hat, and looking so cool and contented as to infuriate me. "Well," he said, in a few moments, "you are cross. Come, take a walk; I have to go over the river, and—is it too far for you? Who knows how soon, like knight and maid, we may track these old ways again!"

I picked up my hat from the floor, and we walked toward the long, covered bridge that spanned the river. Leaving its hot and dusty interior, we took a road that lay across desolate meadows, gradually gaining higher ground, till the queer brown houses of Berkeley began to straggle down to us, and we found ourselves in the long, elm-shaded street—the pride

of the dwellers therein. I walked on slowly until Morrison ended his errand, when we turned back again. The hour altered the scene. Soft rose and amber faded into the blue of upper heaven, and faint earth-mists began to creep from the meadows, which bore a loneliness I had never felt before. Some portion of my mood escaped me as we talked unrestrainedly.

"I dread this new uncertainty so, my nature shrinks so timorously from the life before me, that I wish I could slip quite out of it. I feel hopeless."

"Look at the bridge," said he, as we neared it. "Along its dark perspective friendly little lamps glitter; there is no life without them. You should have nothing to trouble you deeply. Have you?"

"I suppose not. There is nothing to weep for, nothing to anticipate; nobody to regret, and nobody to whom I am anything more than Miss Oliver."

We had entered the bridge. It was deserted. The low gurgle of the water and our lingering footsteps were the only sounds that roused the echoes.

"Pshaw!" said Morrison, and put his arm around me—he knew he might, perhaps. "How desperate you women are when a little sad! Now I would work off, in my calculations or rough riding, such a mood as this; but you brood over it until you are ready for a flying-leap from the parapet. Are you not Margie to me?"

His tone shot through me. Oh, how happy I might be! Then came the flashing thought, like the rare jewel that makes the weary diamond-seeker free.

We came out on the open road again, and I asked him if he had seen Elsie, my cousin's daughter.

"Not since she was a child," he answered. He had heard she was very pretty, but not prettier than all young ladies, he imagined.

"They are very gay there. I wonder what sort of setting you will make for yourself! Can you turn fashionist?"

"I may."

"There is only one thing that I rejoice at in this transplantation—you will be on my ground; within these past few years we have been separated more than I like. You must tell your cousin James that I am one of your pieces of property."

He lingered in the doorway, and I knew felt retrospective and a little sad, as I did, at the thought of the old place

being deserted; but he said nothing but cheerful words, and bade me good-night.

Days sped, and, clasped in Elsie's arms I felt my real poverty—that Nature had left me giftless. Here stood one who dazzled my senses. There was nothing neutral or negative about her. All glowed with the immortal tint of loveliness. I never yet saw a perfect statue or a Titian dream of colour, or heard strains of Schubert's music, without pain that almost annulled my pleasure. Some such heart-ache possessed me as I looked at her.

"I admire your Mr. Deane," Elsie said, after his first visit. At the second she whispered, "*Doesn't* he love music? I shall practise Mozart now, you may be sure."

At the third she said nothing.

He had promised to spend a certain Wednesday evening with us, and Elsie offered him the bait of chocolate if he'd come to tea. She spent all the afternoon at her toilet, braiding her hair before the glass, now looping it low, now pushing it back from her face, studying effects. I knew what she was thinking of. I believed she would succeed; and when his eyes fell on her that evening I knew she *had* succeeded.

Not many days after this he found me alone, buried in the papers.

"Put aside your politics," said he; "I want to talk to you."

So I laid down the broad sheet.

"We seem on the thunderous eve of another revolution, it seems. Have you read this leader?"

He put it by.

"I am selfish just now, Margie, and think of nothing but my own embarrassments. I love Elsie. You must have seen it, knowing me as well as you do. Be honest. Do you think it hopeless?"

"Everything yield to the fortunate prince," I answered. "Try."

He lifted my hand to his lips as Elsie swept in all perfume and colour. I don't think he would have spoken just then, barely giving me time to escape, but he saw her mistaking eyes fixed on me.

It was soon over, and my merry maid sprang in, scarlet in her cheeks and fire in her eyes. I must congratulate her.

He found a moment to speak to me that night. It was easier to tell him how glad I was he was satisfied and happy.

For two months he was intensely happy, a brief absence his only misery. Sharp enough, he thought, as he loitered over his adieux in Aldrich's sweet poet

fashion. As he sat in the room with her he watched her unobserved with that full gaze that made me fancy all the fountains of his soul completed it.

"Elsie," I began one night after he had gone, and we sat by the open window together, "how do you love him?"

She echoed my words.

"What do you mean?"

"I know you think him nice and handsome, besides being cleverer than some men, but if he should be very poor, or some fearful thing should happen to him—if you had to wait for your wedding-day all through the freshness of your youth and his—do you feel as if you had feeling enough to carry you over a desert of time and circumstance?"

"Why, if I love him, I love him," she answered; "I don't know about romance."

"I was not talking romance," I said.

The battle guns brought out of ourselves. Morrison was true to himself. With a smile he sang the little ballad of Lovelace's, and as he ended—

"I could not love thee, dear, so much,
Loved I not honour more"—

stooped forward and clasped her hands. She did not understand, but half read some bodeful fate in his passionate glance, my startled air.

"What is it, Morry?" chimed the silver voice.

"I am one of the President's soldiers," he answered, gravely, and changed to tender soothing; which must have proved successful, for I found Elsie studying his commission with a kind of vanity I shared.

Morrison went, and the struggle of months brought him out unscathed. When I saw him fresh, brown, and war-like my courage rose.

One hour in all that summer's patient campaign he bestowed on me. Moved out of all reserve, he suddenly asked—

"Are you dying a slow death, Margie? You are working too hard for the soldiers, and giving drop by drop your blood to these needy veins."

"No," I told him. It was new life. I had found my work. Then we talked of the war seriously and of Elsie. He had parted from her at Saratoga.

"You will watch over her for my sake, the one dear thing I own?"

I promised, and he shook hands warmly and moved away. I looked gravely after

him. Who knew the mischance another month might hold? He caught my look and came back, reuttering his good-by, and for the first time kissed me. When the door fairly closed the only tears I ever shed for him felt hot, heart-wrung.

The wounded came pouring in. The gloomy lists in the paper swelled. It did not startle me when I read his name in the long, confused column; I only thought of what must be done. But what could I do! I was the only one at home—I could not hurry to the battle-field. It was not my right to nurse him when he came. But when my friends wrote me he was in New Haven—that haven of good nursing and devoted care—and not a word was heard from Elsie or her accompanying papa, I took my sober old Louisa and started for Connecticut. Once I thought of the proprieties; then, "Pooh," said I, "the women are too busy to comment on me, and have I not some gray hairs?" It was a relief to feel myself borne along in the rapid train. It was night before we reached our journey's end. That night was the hardest I ever passed.

As early in the morning as I dared we walked to the hospital. At the entrance stood some young girls smiling under their round hats. Their silver chatter ceased as we entered. A few moments' delay and inquiry, and I walked slowly down the room to his bedside.

"Ah me, Morrison Deane!"

He smiled, and said, "You are here, thank God!" I was speechless; but nothing could have torn me from him after that—only Elsie.

He seemed to fail rapidly, and the physicians looked doubtfully at each other—the women sorrowfully at me. They could not bear to lose so loyal, so obedient a soul.

Truer than steel, firmer than the rock, gentle as a girl, yet fighting with a steadfast sternness, and urging on his men with a resolution that there should be no failure. That is the soldier—that was he.

After a long consultation the surgeon told him by how uncertain a thread he held on life. The amputation of his arm might save him; but in his enfeebled state it was a great risk, and yet the only hope.

A letter from Elsie lay next his heart, as he answered cheerfully, "Let it be done. I shall not die of that. She loves me!" he whispered to me, "Let me scratch a line to her before."

So I fastened down a sheet of paper to the portfolio with pins, and gave him a pencil. He had taught himself to write with his left hand, but achieved the epistle with no little difficulty.

"Much as I have longed for her," said he, while I folded it, "I am thankful she accepts my will so patiently. Not for all the comfort she could bring would I have her exposed to these scenes for an hour. If I die," turning his eyes full on my face, "she will only know she has lost me, without the added anguish of detail, for she has not your anchored soul."

After the operation, contrary to all their fears, he began to rally; daily he grew better till my blood began to bound again. Hour after hour as I sat and fanned him, trying to create a coolness in the heated air, his eyes met mine with undaunted courage.

"I can never fight again!" was the only desponding thing he said.

"But then you can be a tax-gatherer," the doctor suggested.

A few mornings later and this watchful attendant said—

"This is unaccountable! Captain Deane was so well yesterday that I began to think of sending him home; to-day is the weakest yet, his pulse is absolutely nothing."

"Is the arm painful?" walking to him.

"Not much," he answered. The doctor made his examinations and went away dissatisfied. I watched him lie motionless, silent, pale, only a quiet breath or weary movement showing him alive. There was no change for the better: as the days passed he sank under an invisible hand.

Then it came to pass that I said, as I leaned over him, "Shall I not send for Elsie now?"

He turned his face to the wall as he answered—"She will not marry a cripple, Margie; she has changed her mind."

That letter, like the anchorite's cross of points, was on his breast; he gave it to me, but could I read her renunciation? I could not see. It dropped unheeded as I put my arm over him and touched his cheek with mine. I could not help it. His enemy had struck him unarmed and unaware.

He turned his face to me.

"Is it so, poor child?" said he, faintly. "Are we all wrong? Be faithful; God will set it right."

The hour came when they lowered him into the earth, and fired their volleys over him.

I wished they could have dug a grave for me, but I have to live.

AN ESSAY ON TASTE.

WHAT is Taste?—is a question easily asked, but not so easily answered. The idea which the word creates in the mind is different in different individuals. We do not mean the *taste* or sensation experienced when food is taken into the mouth, neither are we going to discourse about what may have a pleasant or unpleasant flavour on the tongue. What we have to say relates to the mind, to the perceptive faculties, to intellectual, not to animal taste.

There are few persons who in the course of their lives will not have noticed that certain objects which they have seen always produce a feeling of pleasure, while other objects excite no emotion, or else are regarded with annoyance. One man sees the sun rise, and his mind immediately becomes filled with admiration at

the view of the golden light shining over the landscape, flashing and quivering from the ripples of the river, glowing steadily on the hilltops, flickering among rustling leaves, or streaming broadly across the dewy glades of the forest. Or perhaps he contemplates the sky from which the shades of night are disappearing, and bethinks himself of the majesty of creation, of the wondrous phenomena by which sunrise is produced. Or the thought comes to him of the millions of beings about to awaken to another day of blessing and of labour. Any one, or all of these ideas would call up pleasurable feelings, the individual would feel something within himself corresponding to the scene before him. Its grandeur, though impressive, would satisfy his perceptions

of the beautiful; in fact, his *taste* would be gratified: or as the poet expresses it—

“His *tasteful* mind enjoys
Alike the complicated charms which glow
Through the wide landscape.”

Such a person may be what is called uneducated, that is, he may not have much book learning, and he may have mingled but little with society; yet his mind may be alive to natural beauties. If his mind were cultivated, if he knew something of the laws of light and shade, and colour and harmony, it is more than probable that his enjoyment would be increased. On the other hand, however, there are persons to whom a sunrise would be nothing more than the coming on of daylight: the flashing beams, and curling mists, and fading glooms are nothing to them. If they have any feeling at all it is perhaps that the morning is rather raw, and so they betake themselves to their business, and seek for pleasure elsewhere. Of an individual of this class it may be said—

“A primrose by a river’s brim
A yellow primrose is to him,
And it is nothing more.”

These two cases may be taken as examples of the presence or the absence of the faculty of taste. Some people consider taste as an instinct, a feeling which comes of itself; others are of opinion that it is not an influence growing within us, but existing outside of and round about us. Sir Joshua Reynolds stated it to be “that act of the mind by which we like or dislike, whatever be the subject;” and this may be accepted as the true definition, because it is seen that cultivation of the mind will produce a faculty of taste in persons who once were without it, and in fact it will be found that “every object which pleases, must give us pleasure on certain principles.”

What we have said concerning the sunrise will apply also to other objects. In a picture gallery, for instance, one person singles out the landscapes for inspection, a second looks at none but portraits, a third has an eye only for architecture, and so on; the taste of each is gratified, and perhaps equally gratified. It does not follow that the man who likes houses best, should be less satisfied than he who admires landscapes. It is wisely ordered that tastes should differ, or else we should be all striving for the same thing: and what a world of disappointments we should

then be living in! What is beauty to one is ugliness to another. Negroes see beauty in their women, although they have thick lips, and black skins smeared with grease; but if a white man wishes for beauty, he seeks among the females of his own country and colour, and not among the woolly-headed Africans. We see in our own neighbourhood how the plainest of people are sometimes found to be handsome according to some standard of beauty; and so it is with all nature and all art.

Imagination has a great deal to do with taste; and perhaps the difference between a man who sees beauty in a sunrise or a landscape, and one who does not, is owing to the fact that the one *can* imagine and the other cannot. The dull mind sees nothing to admire, nothing to inspire glad or grateful feelings, where, with the other—

“The meanest flow’ret of the vale,
The simplest note that swells the gale,
The common sun, the air, the skies,
To him are opening Paradise.”

And yet if we could follow that dull individual into all his pursuits, we should probably find out that he is not altogether devoid of taste; perhaps he has a liking for animals, or he sees beauties in a drawing which a friend of his pasted up on the cottage wall years ago, and in this we see a wise arrangement of Providence, which leaves no creature uncared for.

Any one may cultivate or acquire a taste in the same way as he acquires a knowledge of arithmetic or geography. We are sure of this from experience. We see that the tastes of the people of this country have improved during the last twenty years: look for instance at the plaster casts, or images as they are called, which Italian men and boys sell about our streets, how very superior they are to those formerly sold. Now they are modelled after some of the best ancient specimens of art, and are truly beautiful in form and execution, and they add a grace to the humble cottage as well as to the stately drawing-room. But some years ago, as most readers will remember, the only images offered for sale were parrots, cats, dogs, and other queer objects, stained with tawdry colours, and as unlike what they were intended to represent as a scarecrow is unlike a human being. In the matter of books and pictures also, the improvement is not less striking, and for very little money both old and young of the present gene-

ration can make themselves acquainted with excellent works, written, engraved, or painted, which at one time could only be obtained by the rich. As an instance of popular taste we may mention an engraving published some years ago, representing three choristers in their stall, with the epigraph "We praise thee, O God!" No publisher could be found willing to bring it out, the artist therefore sent it forth on his own account, and it has sold by thousands, so completely did it suit the taste of the public. The drawing of this picture, however, is said not to be according to the strict rules of art, and it affords proof that the pleasure to be derived from an object does not always depend on fidelity to rules. There is a moral taste, as well as an intellectual taste, and it is the moral taste to which the picture here referred to makes its appeal.

There are several ways in which taste may be acquired or cultivated: by observation, by reading, by comparison, study, and experience. The English are said to be generally deficient in matters of taste; we want cultivation; while it has been remarked that in the markets of France, the women in tying only two flowers together for sale, give them a tasteful effect which no English market-woman would ever be capable of. And yet the means for beginning are very simple—they lie ready to our purpose in town and country. In taking children out to walk, instead of moving steadily forwards as though getting over the ground were the only consideration, it is well to let them look at the numerous articles displayed in shop windows. Among these, especially in large towns, are to be seen specimens of the rarest art and workmanship; and children soon learn to discriminate in their youthful way, and with a few hints from older people form to themselves pretty good notions of what true taste means. Then in the country nature herself supplies the means of inspiring and forming taste: if the attention of young persons be directed to the elements of beauty, they will learn before long to find them out for themselves. They will see that the windings of a river add a charm to a landscape—that the effect of a broad extent of wood is improved if a church spire, or a few tall poplars or slender fir-trees, rise from any part of it. They would know the fact without being aware of the reason why. The explanation is that a long

range of horizontal lines is made more picturesque when broken by one or more vertical lines. Then again, the forms and varieties of trees may be pointed out to children, how the branches spring forth in all directions, and the leaves seem glad as the breeze sweeps through them. The copses and hedgerows too, and all their numerous plants and flowers, will not only aid in the object, but convey at the same time knowledge of a delightful and elevating character. A love for flowers is generally a sign of true taste; and many persons have been led to the highest appreciation of the faculty from having had a garden of their own, in which, month after month, buds and blossoms came forth in their beauty. How often we see people in the narrow, smoky streets of towns, trying to raise a few flowers on a window-ledge, or in a patch of stubborn ground, in obedience to

"An instinct call it, a blind sense;

A happy genial influence,

Coming one knows not how nor whence,"

and herein lies the germ of a taste which may become a source of never-ceasing satisfaction to its possessor.

Another source of taste may be found in observing the habits of birds and listening to their song. Many an aged heart, weary of the world, remembers the time when the twitter of a bird seemed the sweetest of music, and regrets the loss of the simple taste which found a charm in simple objects. A country lad a short time since was driving a village preacher along a narrow lane in a gig, when suddenly he stopped the horse and said, "Do you hear that nightingale, sir?" as the bird poured forth its mellifluous notes from a neighbouring thicket. There was taste in that boy's mind, which made him find true pleasure in musical sounds.

An observant youth may have been brought up in a small country town, where, perhaps, the best buildings he sees are the banker's house and the town-hall. He forms his own notions as to the beauty of these. By and by, however, he goes away and sees other and better buildings: perhaps he lives for a time in a large town where much of the architecture is grand and elegant. So that when he returns to his native town with his improved ideas, he says to himself—The banker's house and the town-hall are not such very fine buildings after all! This indicates the way in which taste is to be found: if we want to get a good taste we must study good objects. Whether it be poetry, or

pictures, or paintings, or buildings, we should endeavour to see the most and best that we can. The present writer once fell in with a navvie who had a great taste for the beautiful in architecture: he made a point of viewing all the cathedrals in England, and whenever he happened to be working anywhere within twenty miles of an old ruin, he was sure to walk over and look at it, to linger about it for a time, find out its beauties and carry them away in his memory. He had been to see Kenilworth Castle on the day I met with him; and his honest face glowed, and his light blue Saxon eyes sparkled as he spoke of the picturesque and ivy-covered remains. This man enjoyed pleasures to which thousands of his companions were entire strangers, and in him we have a proof that refined taste may co-exist with the humblest and most laborious employments. It is well known, too, that many of the pitmen near Newcastle are diligent students of mathematics, and cultivate the higher branches of the science with great ability.

To follow fashion is not a proof of taste, because mere imitation is not sufficient to form the genuine faculty. It has been truly said, "There is scarcely a subject upon which men differ more than concerning the objects of their pleasures and amusements; and this difference subsists not only among individuals, but among ages and nations; almost every generation accusing that which preceded it of bad taste in building, furniture, and dress; and almost every nation having its own peculiar modes and ideas of excellence in these matters, to which it pertinaciously adheres, until one particular people has acquired such an ascendancy in power and reputation as to set what is called the fashion. When this fashion is indiscriminately adopted upon the blind principle of imitation, and without any consideration of the differences of climate, constitution, or habits of life, every one who presumes to deviate from it is thought an odd mortal, a humourist void of all just feeling, taste, or elegance."

We have endeavoured in the present article to show what is meant by taste generally: in a future number we shall go into particulars, chiefly as relates to in-door life, and point out in what way taste may be used, so as to add a grace to domestic existence and the comforts of home: meantime—

"Whoever possesses the ordinary powers of perception, sensibility of heart, good

sense, and an imagination capable of being roused by the striking objects of nature and of art, may, without inspiration, become by mere experience, a man of fine taste in the objects of which he aspires to be a critical judge." Yet such a man, as Reynolds observes, should have or acquire "a habit of comparing and digesting his notions. He ought not to be wholly unacquainted with that part of philosophy which gives him an insight into human nature, and relates to the manners, characters, passions, and affections. He ought to know *something* concerning *mind*, as well as a great deal concerning the *body*, and the various external works of nature and of art; for it is only the power of distinguishing right from wrong that is properly denominated taste."

We have now shown what was generally to be understood by taste, its existence as a feeling and the manner of its development; we have now to show in what way it may be made to lend a charm to domestic life, and add to the pleasures and enjoyments of home.

It too often happens that taste is entirely neglected in the ordinary business of life and in its recreations. As was once remarked in the *Times*, "In no country in the world is so little art employed, so little invention exerted, such obstinate attachment to worn-out routine as among our show people. All is coarse, supremely silly, or simply disgusting. There is no genuine mirth, no healthy expansion of spirits. Riot and low debauchery are the substitutes." In looking for the cause of this condition of things, we find it to consist in a lack of the inventive faculty, and from the unwillingness that most people have to abandon what they have been accustomed to, however faulty it may be, and to practise new or improved measures.

Leaving this, which belongs to the general question, we shall take a few particulars of house-fitting and furnishing, and consider the means of regulating them by taste.

As regards the painting of a house: if this be done according to certain rules or laws, the effect and appearance of the whole, when finished, will be greatly superior to that of chance-work. It is the old story of the right and the wrong: the right is always the best; the wrong always the worst. Mr. Hay, a practical house-painter, who has paid much attention to the subject, observes—

"Apartments lighted from the south

and west, particularly in a summer residence, should be cool in their colouring; but the apartments of a town house ought all to approach towards a warm tone; as also such apartments as are lighted from the north and east of a country residence.

"When the tone of an apartment is, therefore, fixed by the choice of the furniture, it is the business of the house-painter to introduce such tints upon the ceiling, walls, and wood-work, as will unite the whole in perfect harmony. In a drawing-room vivacity, gaiety, and light cheerfulness should characterize the colouring. This is produced by the introduction of light tints of brilliant colours, with a considerable degree of contrast and gilding; but the brightest colours and strongest contrasts should be upon the furniture, the effect of which will derive additional value and brilliancy from the walls being kept in due subordination, although, at the same time, partaking of the general liveliness.

"The characteristic colouring of a dining-room should be warm, rich, and substantial! and where contrasts are introduced, they should not be vivid.

"Parlours ought to be painted in a medium style, between that of a drawing-room and dining-room.

"In bed-rooms, a light, cleanly, and cheerful style of colouring is the most appropriate. A greater degree of contrast may be here admitted between the room and its furniture than in any other apartment, as the bed and window curtains form a sufficient mass to balance a tint of equal intensity upon the walls. There may also, for the same reason, be admitted gayer and brighter colours upon the carpet.

"Staircases, lobbies, and vestibules, should all be rather of a cool tone, and the style of the colour should be simple and free of contrast. The effect to be produced is that of architectural grandeur, which owes its beauty more to the effect of light and shadow than to any arrangement of colours. Staircases and lobbies being cool in tone, and simple in the style of their colouring, will much improve the effect of the apartments which enter from them."

In some respects the remarks made on paint as a covering for walls will apply to paper; the same general law as to colour may be attended to, but with great variation of effect, owing to the great varieties of pattern in paper-hangings. According

to the taste or judgment with which the pattern is chosen, so will the appearance of the room, when papered, be agreeable or displeasing. Large patterns should, of course, be only used in large rooms. Dark-tinted papers are most suitable for light rooms, and light papers for dark rooms; many a dingy or gloomy apartment may be made to wear a cheerful aspect by attention to this particular. Stripes, whether on a lady's dress, or on the walls of a room, always give the effect of height; consequently a low room is improved by being hung with a striped paper. The effect is produced by a wavy stripe as well as a straight one, and as curved lines are the most graceful, they should generally be preferred. Any pattern with lines crossed so as to form squares, is unsuitable for a low room, but with the lines made sloping or diagonal, there is not the same objection. A diamond trellis pattern, with a slender plant creeping over it, looks well in a small summer parlour. For a common sitting-room, a small geometrical pattern is very suitable; being well covered, it does not show accidental stains or bruises, and in the constant repetition of the design there is no one object to attract the eye more than another, but all appears as a harmonious whole. These are sometimes called Elizabethan patterns, they are much used for staircases, halls, and passages; but they are not to be chosen at random. According to the height and dimensions of the passage or staircase such should be the pattern. A large pattern on a narrow staircase, and in a passage not more than eight feet in height, has a very heavy and disagreeable effect. A light gray or yellow marble, divided into blocks by thin lines, and varnished, will be found suitable for most passages, if care be taken to adapt the size of the blocks to the place where they are to appear. A size that would look well in a hall twenty feet wide, would be altogether too large in one of only four or six feet. Many persons must have noticed, in their visits of business or pleasure, that some houses present a cheerful aspect as soon as the door is opened, while others look so dull that they make one low-spirited on entering them. The difference is caused by the good or bad taste with which they have been papered or painted.

A safe rule with regard to paperhangings, is to choose nothing that looks extravagant or unnatural; no staring pattern

or colour, which would only be fit to make caps for May-day sweeps. Regard should be had to the uses of an apartment: a drawing-room should be light and cheerful, a parlour should look warm and comfortable without being gloomy; bed-room papers should be cool and quiet, and generally of a small pattern, and of such colours as harmonize with bed-furniture and other fittings. It is worth while to consider the sort of pictures to be hung on a wall: gilt frames show best on a dark ground, and dark frames on a light ground; taking care, however, to avoid violent contrasts. Borders are seldom used now; they make a room look low, without being ornamental.

The walls being properly papered, the next thing is to consider the pattern of the carpet. In this also the rule must be followed, of selecting small patterns for small rooms. There is economy in this as well as taste, because small-patterned carpets are generally found the most durable. As a rule, a formal geometrical pattern is best for a carpet, it should be something which does not appear unnatural to tread upon. It is a mistake to put flowers, trees, or figures of birds or animals into a carpet, for we do not walk on such things: far other are their purposes and uses. Sometimes a carpet is made to represent a picture or landscape, which is also a mistake, for it offends our notions of propriety to see such objects spread on a floor. In the formal pattern all these defects are avoided, it is not unusual to walk upon ornamental pavements or floors, and we are not displeased at seeing varieties of similar ornaments reproduced in a carpet.

Another reason why a small pattern should be chosen is, that it suits best with the furniture of a room. The furniture must of course cover some portions of the carpet, so that if the pattern be large, there is so much confusion between what is seen and what is hidden, that a very disagreeable effect is produced. With a small pattern, on the contrary, the concealing of a portion by the furniture, does not spoil the effect of that which remains uncovered. In general suitability the Turkey carpet is the best; it is adapted for almost any style of furniture, and no one ever gets tired of it, owing to the perfect naturalness and harmony of the pattern. Let it be remembered that neither on the wall nor on the floor should there be any one strong predominating colour which injures the effect of every-

thing else in the room. Red curtains suit a green, brown, or grey carpet, and blue curtains assort with a carpet in which buff and yellow tints predominate. Chintz patterns are so numerous, that they may be chosen to suit any style of paper or carpet, and white muslin curtains, as it is often said, harmonise with everything except dirt and disorder.

Pictures, if well chosen, add much to the good appearance of a room, and impart to it an air of completeness and a home-look, which many people know how to appreciate. To produce this effect, the subjects of the pictures must be such as we can truly sympathize with, something to awaken our admiration, reverence, or love. All the feelings of our nature may be illustrated by pictures. There are some which we seem to make bosom companions of, others have a moral effect, and at times prevent our going astray by their silent monitions. It is therefore worth while to take pains and choose good subjects, whether in engravings or paintings, and to frame and hang them suitably when chosen. Gilt frames are most suitable for rather dark paintings and on a deep coloured wall; while prints look well in a frame of comely position, oak, rosewood, or bird's-eye maple, finished with a gilt moulding. Care should be taken to hang them in a proper light, so as best to bring out all the effects of the pictures, and to place them so that the light shall fall from the same side as represented by the painter. In picture-galleries and great houses, brass rods are fixed all round the rooms close to the ceiling, from which the pictures are hung; but in small rooms it is often best not to show the lines or wires by which the pictures hang. This is done by nailing a strong cord across the back, about two inches below the top, and then to suspend it from two nails standing out but a little way from the wall. When there are several pictures in a room, the ordinary rule is to have either the upper or lower edge of the frames in a line, on whichever side they may be hung.

It is scarcely possible to lay down a rule with respect to the ordinary furniture of a room. For instance, sometimes a showy centre table is seen in the middle of a room, where the carpet and every other article is shabby and out of repair; or a flashy looking-glass stands above the chimney-piece, as though to reflect the incongruous taste of its owner. Shabby things always look the shabbier when

thus contrasted with what is bright and new. We do not mean to say that new articles should never be purchased; we remark only that in buying furniture, regard should be had to the condition of the room in which it is to be placed. For this reason, second-hand furniture is sometimes preferable to new.

"So many men, so many minds," is an old saying; and scarcely two people agree in choosing their assortment of furniture. What is convenient for one is inconvenient for another, and that which is considered ornamental by one family, would be thought ugly by their neighbours. There are, however, certain articles suited to most rooms—an ordinary parlour, for example. The number of chairs depends on the size of the room, eight are usually chosen, two of them being elbows. A square two-flap pembroke-table, or a circular one with tripod stand, occupies the centre of the apartment. At one side stands a sofa, a sideboard, a chiffonier, or perhaps a bookcase. Sometimes the chiffonier, with a few shelves fixed to the wall above it, is made to do duty as a bookcase, and it answers the purpose very well. If there be no sofa, there will be probably an easy-chair in a snug corner, not far from the fire-place; in another corner stands a small work-table, or a light occasional-table is placed near the window to hold a flower-basket or some other ornamental article. These constitute the articles most needed in a room. There are several smaller things which may be added according to circumstances.

It is one thing to have furniture in a room, and another to know how to arrange it. To do this to the best advantage requires the exercise of a little thought and judgment. Some people live with their furniture in the most inconvenient positions, because it never occurred to them to shift it from place to place, until they had really found which was the most

suitable. Those who are willing to make the attempt, will often find that a room is improved in appearance and convenience by a little change in the place of the furniture.

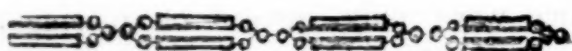
It is too much the practice to cover the mantelpiece with a number and variety of knick-knacks and monstrosities by way of ornament; but this is in very bad taste. Three, or at most four articles, are all that should be seen in that conspicuous situation. Vases of white porcelain, called "Parian," or of old china, or a small statue, or a shell or two, are the most suitable. The forms of some of the white vases now sold at a low price are so elegant that it is a real pleasure to look at them.

The remarks we have made apply alike to all classes of society—to the lowly as well as the lofty. The hard-working cottager may learn how to improve and refine his humble home, as well as those in more wealthy circumstances. A love of the orderly and beautiful is not confined to any one class, it may be acquired by all. An American author says, "A labourer having secured a neat home and a wholesome table, should ask nothing more for the senses, but should consecrate his leisure and what may be spared of his earnings, to the culture of himself and his family, to the best books, to the best teaching, to pleasant and profitable intercourse, to sympathy, and the offices of humanity, and to the enjoyment of the beautiful in nature and art." He is not to strive to be a mere imitator of rich people, but to set himself with a true and diligent spirit to make the best of such opportunities as fall in his way. In the house, in the garden, in daily duty or deportment, there is always something which may be amended; and nowhere can endeavours after improvement be so worthily bestowed, or so richly rewarded, as at home.

PARLOUR OCCUPATIONS.

ORNAMENTAL BEAD AND BUGLE-WORK.—PART II.

We have now come to the second division of our subject — namely, trimmings, and gimps composed solely of beads and bugles, and suitable for ornamenting dresses, mantle, and bonnets or caps.



The first pattern is worked in one-third inch black bugles, and cut-glass seed beads; an ounce of the former and a bunch of the latter will make a couple of yards of the trimming. Take two of our silver wire bead needles, and thread in each a yard length of strong linen thread, or stout silk; knot these strands together, and pin them to a lead cushion, then work as follows:—Thread a bead, a bugle, and a bead on one of the strands, and a bead, a bugle, and three beads on the other; pass the first strand through the last two beads of the second in a downward, or parallel direction; draw the work up to the end, and then repeat.



The second pattern may be worked in black cut beads, and gold cut beads of the size of a mustard-seed; or in white and silver, or gray and steel beads. The first must be threaded on black silk, or strong thread, and the latter on white Chinese silk. In the first it would be best to give preference to strong thread.

Thread two of our needles with yard-lengths of silk, knot the strands together, and pin them to a weighted cushion; work as follows:—Thread a black bead on one strand, and a black and gold bead upon the other; cross the first strand through the gold bead, on the second, and repeat, drawing up each diamond as it is formed, so that they may set evenly, but not stiffly. When these threads are worked out, take two fresh needle-fulls of similar length, knot them together, and pin them on to the cushion close to the commencement of the first row of diamonds. Thread a black and a gold bead on one strand, and pass the other down through the side bead of the first diamond on the row of diamonds already made, and then cross it through the gold

bead; repeat. A second row will thus be worked, in which the outer side beads of the diamonds first made form the inner side beads of the diamonds we are adding.

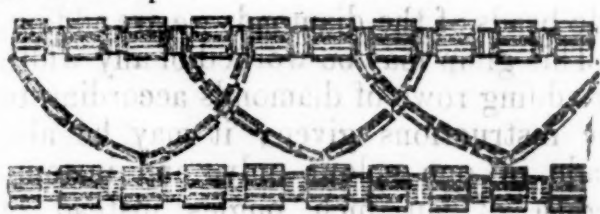
This gimp may be worked of any width by adding rows of diamonds according to the instructions given; it may be also made in one colour only, and in one-eighth of an inch bugles instead of beads.



The third pattern is worked in gray bugles and small cut glass beads, and threaded on stout gray silk. Take two of our bead needles and thread them with yard lengths of silk, knot the ends together, and pin them to a cushion; work as follows:—Thread a bead on one strand and two beads on the other, cross the first strand through the second bead on the other; draw it up; again thread a bead on one strand, and two upon the other, and cross the first strand through the last bead on the second one; thread a bead, a bugle, and a bead upon the one strand, and a bead, a bugle, two beads, a bugle, and a bead upon the other, and cross the first strand through the last bead, bugle, and bead, upon the second; draw the work up; thread a bead, a bugle, and a bead on one strand, and a bead, a bugle, and two beads upon the other, and cross the first strand through the last of the two beads on the second. Work a diamond in beads by threading one on one strand, and two upon the other, and crossing the first strand through the last bead on the second; and then recommence the large diamond composed of beads and bugles, and thread it as before directed.

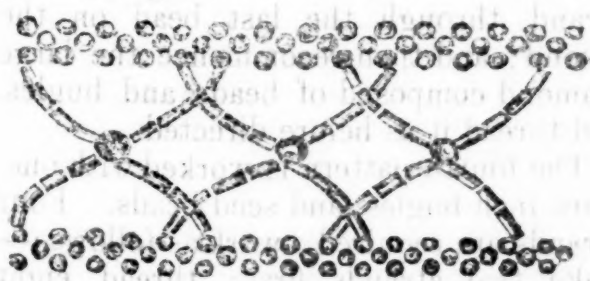
The fourth pattern is worked with one-third inch bugles, and seed beads. Four strands are required; work as follows:—Take two strands first; thread eight beads on one, and ten on the other, and cross the first through the two last beads on the second; repeat until the threads are nearly used. Attach the other two threads to the commencement; thread a bugle on both the threads, place it in the first loop of beads, thread two beads on

one strand, and lay them over, and pass the other thread under the loop. Then pass both the threads through a bugle, and lay that in the centre of the second loop; and having threaded two beads on one strand, and pass the other strand under the loop, thread another bugle on both threads; repeat until all the loops are filled up.



The fifth pattern is worked entirely in one-eighth inch bugles, and with strong linen thread and our bead needles.

With two yard-length strands work diamonds of bugles by threading one on one strand and two on the other, and crossing the first strand through the second bugle on the other. Two rows of these diamonds must be worked, and laid in parallel lines over the cushion; then another strand must be added to the extremity of the left-hand row of diamonds, and four bugles having been threaded on it, the needle must be passed through the side bugle of the third diamond in the right hand row; but not in the direction we are working, but backwards, as it were, putting the needle through the bugle from the lower end, or that nearest the worker; five bugles must now be threaded, and the needle passed through the side bugle of the third diamond on the left hand row, in the proper direction. Proceed thus, threading four bugles, and passing the needle through the third side bugle of the right hand row, in a reverse or backward direction, and then threading five bugles, and passing it through the third side bugle on the left hand row, in a proper direction.

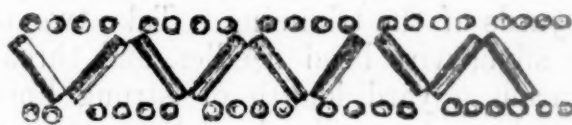


The sixth pattern is worked with one-eighth inch bugles, seed beads, and beads one size larger, on strong thread.

Make two lengths of diamonds with seed beads in the usual way. Take one of these rows, and attach another strand to it, thread five bugles, a large bead, and

then five bugles; count ten beads in the chain of diamonds, and pass the needle back in a reverse direction through the tenth and ninth beads; again thread five bugles, a large bead and five bugles, and having counted ten more beads, again pass the needle back through the tenth and ninth beads; repeat until the length is worked.

Now take the other row, and having laid it exactly parallel with the first, attach a strand to it, and work in the same way; only, instead of placing a fresh large bead between each five bugles, pass the needle through the bead already strung on the side which has been worked, and thus unite the two sides together and form the pattern.



The seventh pattern is worked with grain heads and one-third inch bugles on strong linen thread.

Two strands are required; commence by threading a bugle on one strand, and four beads and a bugle on the other, and cross the first strand through the bugle on the second; continue as follows:—Thread four beads on one strand, and a bugle on the other, crossing the first strand through the bugle on the second; repeat until the requisite length is threaded, always putting four beads on the one strand, and a bugle on the other, and crossing the first strand through the bugle on the second. Draw up each division as it is formed.

For this pattern we require seed beads and one-third inch bugles. Two rows of



diamonds have to be threaded first, in the usual manner, and of the requisite length. This being done, they must be taken and laid exactly parallel with each other, and then another strand attached to the beginning of one of them, and a bugle threaded on it, and the needle passed through the side bead of the third diamond on the opposite row; another bugle is then to be threaded, and the needle passed through the side bead of the sixth diamond on the first row. Proceed thus, threading a bugle, and alternately passing through a bead on one side or the other, always omitting two

diamonds, and taking the side bead of the third.

When these two rows are united, the pattern may be widened by laying another row parallel with them, and adding that in similar manner, taking care to arrange the bugles so that they shall form diamonds with those of the first row.

Any width can be worked by continuing to add rows of diamonds with bugles between.

This gimp, worked four rows wide, makes a very handsome trimming for the front and skirt of a dress.

In working these gimps, the chief matters to be attended to are, to use strong and even, but not too coarse, silk or thread; to use beads and bugles of an uniform size, and to draw the work up evenly, but never so tightly as to strain it, as the bugles will then often fray and snap the silk.

Strictly follow our directions, with patience and perseverance; and we feel assured that, however difficult at first may appear the working out of this art, the path to success will speedily be unfolded, and the reader need fear no failure. A modern poetess has said—

"The proudest motto for the young—

Write it in lines of gold—

Upon thy heart and in thy mind

The stirring words unfold;

And in misfortune's dreary hour,

Or fortune's prosperous gale,

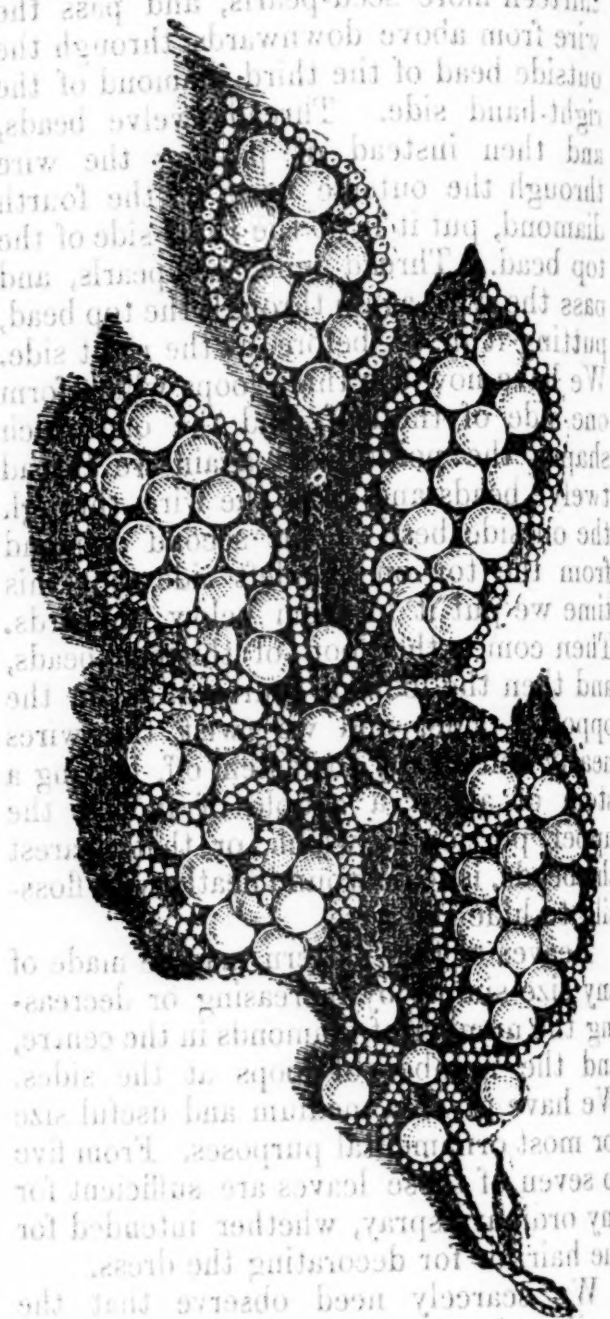
'Twill have a holy, cheering power,—

There's no such word as *fail*."

Our subject needs not many introductory remarks this time; for it will be remembered by our readers, that at page 474, vol. vii., we have already given full and clear directions for buying and choosing beads and bugles—the same are equally applicable here. For other materials, all that will be required are fine wire, such as used by flower mounters, and floss-silk. The wire should be covered with white for white beads or bugles, with black for those which are black, and with green for green bugles or beads. The black-covered wire will also do for purple, and the white for pink or blue. Simple, uncovered wire may be used; but as it shines through and, besides, shows itself every here and there, it does not look so neat or so well. Of course, the floss-silk to wind the flowers must be of the same colour as the beads or bugles of which the flower is composed.

Our first cut represents a spray com-

posed of Roman-pearl beads. For it we require half-a-dozen rows of seed pearls,



PEARL BEAD FLOWER.

two rows of pearls the size of a pea, and a row of pearls of an intermediate size, and about three yards of the fine, white-covered wire, and a skein or reel of white floss-silk.

For a leaf, take a piece of wire about three-eighths in length, and thirteen of the largest beads, and work the diamond pattern, as we elsewhere directed—these beads will make four diamonds. Care must be taken in drawing them up, or the wires will either crack and flaw the beads, if drawn too tightly, or be too visible if not drawn up sufficiently. Having completed the diamonds which constitute the centre of the leaf, twist the wires neatly together to form a stem, and take a second piece of wire of the same length, pass it through the bottom bead of the centre of the leaf, thread fourteen seed pearls upon it, and then pass it through the right outside bead of

the second diamond, putting it in above, and letting it come out below. Thread thirteen more seed-pearls, and pass the wire from above downwards through the outside bead of the third diamond of the right-hand side. Thread twelve beads, and then instead of passing the wire through the outside bead of the fourth diamond, put it in at the right side of the top bead. Thread nine seed-pearls, and pass the wire again through the top bead, putting it in, as before, at the right side. We have now the three loops which form one side of the leaf, and the one which shapes the point; and again we thread twelve beads and pass the wire through the outside bead of the second diamond from the top on the left side, but this time we put it in from below, upwards. Then comes the loop of thirteen beads, and then the loop of fourteen, as on the opposite side, and we twist the wires neatly and firmly to fasten off, leaving a stem of about a couple of inches, the upper portion of which, or that nearest the beads, is to be wound neatly with floss-silk to hide the wire.

Leaves of this pattern may be made of any size simply by increasing or decreasing the number of diamonds in the centre, and the number of loops at the sides. We have given a medium and useful size for most ornamental purposes. From five to seven of these leaves are sufficient for any ordinary spray, whether intended for the hair, or for decorating the dress.

We scarcely need observe that the smaller the pearls which are used are, the more delicate and *real* will be the appearance of the ornament; and, for very fine work, silver wire must be substituted for the white-covered wire we have spoken of, it being lighter and more pliable.

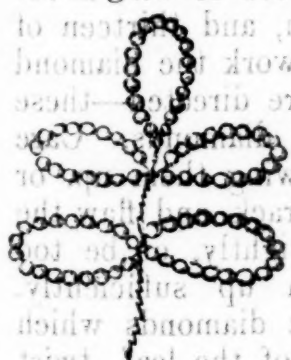
We give a cut of another pattern for leaves, which is very neat and easy. About three-eighths of wire will be required to make a small leaf. Nine seed-pearls are threaded, and slipped to the centre of the wire, which is then folded and twisted tightly together for about the sixth of an inch; nine more beads are then threaded on one wire, and slipped to within a quarter of an inch of the twist, or stem, and that spare quarter of

an inch is firmly twisted with the opposite side of the wire we are using, so as to fix the second loop. Nine beads are then threaded on the other wire, and formed into a loop in like manner. The two wires are then twisted together again for about a quarter of an inch, to form the central stem, and then again a loop is made and fixed on each wire as before, only now eleven beads are to be threaded. The two wires are again twisted together to their extremities, and the leaf is complete, excepting that it has to be wound with floss. Of course the size of these leaves can also be increased *ad libitum*, by taking a longer wire to begin with, increasing the number of loops, and adding one or two more beads in each pair of loops as we approach the base of the leaf—but the size we have given is a very useful one.

The smaller flowers in our spray are thus made:—Take a piece of wire three-eighths of a yard in length, thread five seed-beads, one second-sized bead, and five seed-beads; bring these to within about an inch and a half of one end of the wire, and then twist the wires together so as to form a loop of beads. Make four other similar loops, bringing them all closely side by side, and steadying them by a twist on the wire, and then twist the two ends of the wire together to form a stem, and arrange the five loops in an even circle. Thread a large-sized bead on fine silver wire, twist the wire to keep it firm, and make this bead the centre of the circle of loops, passing the wire it is on down beside the stem, and maintaining it in its place by the floss-silk which winds the stem.

For the larger flowers we first make a small one according to the directions just given, and then take about a quarter of a yard of wire, and passing one end of it through the second sized bead in the middle of one of the loops, thread four seed-beads, one large bead, and four seed-beads on it, and then pass the wire through the second sized bead in the middle of the next loop, thus forming an exterior loop. This we repeat all round until we have an external circle of five loops surrounding the original inner one; the ends of the wire are then very neatly and firmly twisted together with a pair of pliers and cut off close. Two large and two small flowers will suffice for a spray with seven leaves; three flowers are enough for one with only five leaves.

When the leaves and flowers are both



made, they must be tastefully arranged into a spray, and wound together with floss-silk.

Our next pattern is a spray of wheat-ears in pearl or gold-coloured oblong beads. For this we require three rows of oblong beads, which will make a spray of five ears; some fine silver wire, and some floss-silk.

Each ear should have fifteen or eighteen beads in it. As many wires as there are beads must be cut off, the length of each being about three inches. On each wire a bead is to be threaded, and maintained in its place by twisting the wire close up to it. About an inch of wire must be passed through the bead when it is about to be bound into its place with floss; of this inch, one-third projects at the top to form the beard, one-third passes down the middle of the bead, and the remainder is bound in with the twisted wires which constitute the stem. To pearl beads we use silver wire, to gold-coloured beads gold wire must be put. Those who have old bits of gold or silver bullion may unravel that and use it. The wires which hold each bead must be hidden by turn-

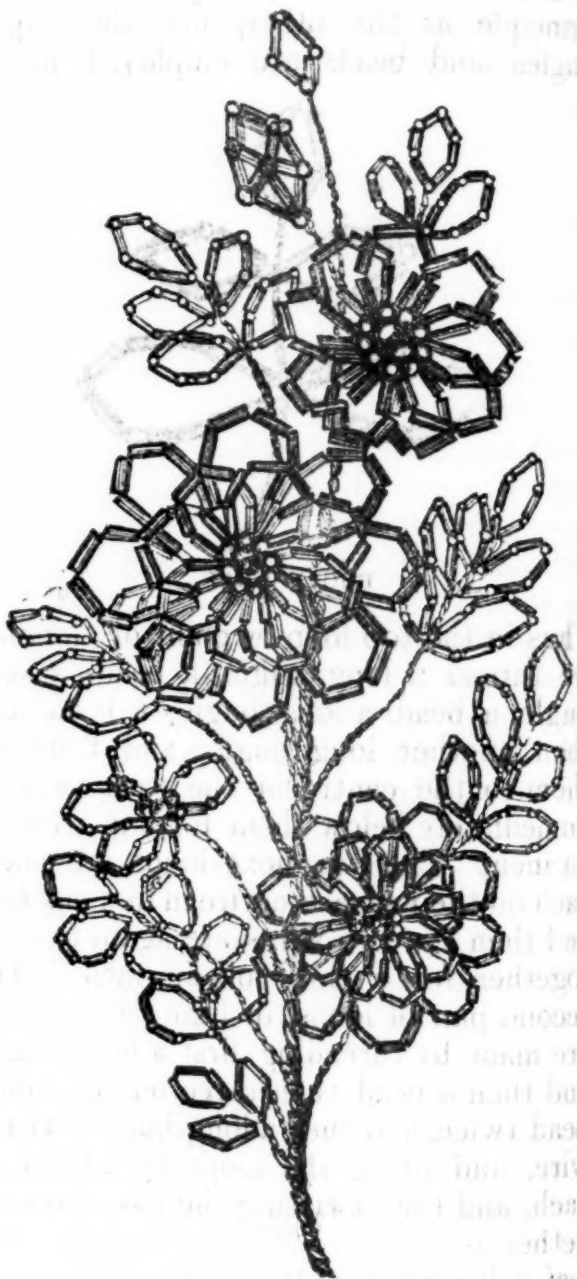


WHEAT-EAR.

ing them to the back or underside of the ear.

Very pretty flowers or sprays may be made of bugles for the decoration of ball-dresses, or for wearing in the hair. Black, white, gray, green, purple, and pink bugles, well adapted for this purpose, may be obtained at any of the bead and bugle makers, or rather retailers; for the

greater part of those we use are imported from abroad. For flowers we use two sizes, the one about an eighth of an inch in length, or rather better, and the other one-third of an inch long. A bright, even-looking bugle, large in the tube, should be chosen—an ounce of each kind will make a fair-sized spray. Besides, we shall require beads rather larger than a mustard-seed—this size is usually solid,



BUGLE SPRAYS.

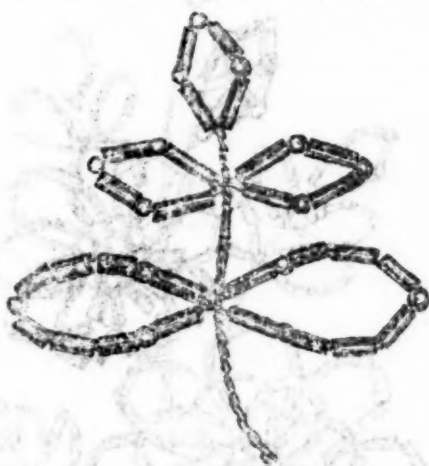
and sold in bunches; a bunch will be sufficient. The solid or grain-like beads are preferable to the hollow, pearl-like beads for these sprays, not being so fragile, and the new style of canvas work in beads has created a supply of the size and sort needed. The other requisites are wire and floss-silk, the wire, as before said, being chosen to match the colour of the bugles. These covered wires are to be obtained at artificial flower makers, and are sold on reels; the green can be bought in knots at wax-flower makers. The floss-silk at any Berlin wool repository.

The leaves are made exactly in the

same way as the bead-leaf we have given a cut and description of, viz., in loops, only the small bugles are used instead of beads. About nine leaves will make a small spray.

There are, however, various patterns of bugle leaves, many of which will suggest themselves to any one practising the work. We will, however, give a cut of another by way of illustration.

This one is made exactly on the same principle as the other, but the larger bugles and beads are employed in it.



BUGLE LEAF.

Thus in the top loop or point of the leaf, we thread a long bugle, a bead, a long bugle, a bead, a long bugle, a bead, and then another long bugle, and bringing them to the centre of the wire, twist it immediately below them for a quarter of an inch. The two next loops are made each on their separate wire in like manner, and then the two wires are again twisted together for a third of an inch. The second pair of loops, or base of the leaf, are made by threading first a long bugle, and then a bead, then three bugles, and a bead twice, and then a long bugle on each wire, and fixing the loops by a twist to each, and then twisting the two wires together as a stem. When complete, each leaf will require putting into shape.

The bugle flowers are of two kinds, double and single, and are composed of bugles of both sizes, and beads, and look all the handsomer if finished off with a large bead, one the size of a pea in the centre.

Take about three-quarters of a yard of wire, thread on it a bead, a long bugle, seven short bugles, and a long bugle; push these to within two inches of one end of the wire, and then pass the longer end of the wire again through the bead from the outside, inwards, or towards the bugles; draw it up gently and closely, and the first loop or petal of the flower is formed. Thirteen loops are required, and

each one is made in the same way, the wire being always put a second time through the bead, entering it from the side of the loop last made, and being drawn closely up. These loops or petals stand up, and overlay each other; when all are completed, the two ends of the wire are twisted together to form the stem, and the circular, cup-shape of the flower is thus finished up.

When the flower is to be double, a second cup, or circle of up-standing loops must be made; but this inner portion contains eleven instead of thirteen petals, and there are but five small bugles instead of seven in each; in all other respects it is exactly similar. The stem is passed down through the centre of the outer cup, and a large bead being threaded on a couple of inches of wire, and maintained in its place by a twist of the ends of the wire, is passed through the centre of the two cups, and the three twisted wires are wound together into one neat stem with floss-silk.

Single flowers look best small; therefore the inner cup, with the central large bead, should be used for them. Various fantastic groupings of beads and bugles may be combined to form other flowers, or to simulate buds. We give a cut of one of them, which is made of long bugles, short bugles, and beads, threaded on four wires, and arranged in diamonds.

About four flowers, two single and two double, a couple of buds, and nine or ten leaves, make a very pretty spray if tastefully grouped and neatly bound together with floss-silk. The size we make them of course depends upon the purpose for which they are required; for looping a dress, five leaves, a bud, and two flowers will be sufficient.

For mourning, black, white, or gray bugles make up very prettily. Green bugles, too, have a very brilliant effect, and elegant sets of sprays or wreaths may be made by following our directions, at a merely nominal price compared with the cost of them if we were to order them to be made. Besides, the work itself is a graceful and pretty employment for the fingers, and calls for a certain degree of taste and imagination, and is very suggestive. We therefore recommend it to our readers in full confidence that it will amuse and interest them.



BUD.

THE CIRCASSIANS.

Of all the peoples of the Caucasus none more fully realize than the Circassians those heroic qualities with which imagination delights to invest the tribes of these mountains. Courage, intelligence, and remarkable beauty, have been liberally bestowed on them by nature; and what is to be admired above all in their character is a calm, noble dignity that never forsakes them, and which they unite with the most chivalric feelings and the most ardent passion for national liberty. "I remember," says M. Hommaire de Hell, "that during my stay at Ekaterinodar, the capital of the Cossacks of the Black Sea, being seated one morning in front of a merchant's house in the company of several Russian officers, I saw a very ill-dressed Circassian come up, who appeared to belong to the lowest class. He stopped before the shop, and while he was cheapening some articles, we examined his sabre. I saw distinctly on it the Latin inscription, *Anno Domini*, 1547, and the blade appeared to me to be of superior temper; the Russians were of a different opinion, for they handed the weapon back to the Circassian with disdainful indifference. The Circassian took it without uttering a word, cut off a handful of his beard with it at a stroke, as easily as though he had done it with a razor, then quietly mounted his horse and rode away, casting on the officers a look of such deep scorn as no words could describe."

The Circassians, ever engaged in war, are in general all well armed. Their equipment consists of a rifle, a sabre, a long dagger, which they wear in front, and a pistol stuck in their belt. Their remarkably elegant costume consists of tight pantaloons, and a short tunic belt round the waist, and having cartridge pockets worked on the breast; their head-dress is a round laced cap, encircled with a black or white border of long-wooled sheepskin. In cold or rainy weather, they wear a hood (*bashlik*), and wrap themselves in an impenetrable felt cloak (*burka*). Their horses are small, but of astonishing spirit and bottom. It has often been ascertained by the Imperial garrisons that Circassian marauders have got over twenty-five or even thirty leagues of ground in a night. When

pursued by the Russians, the mountaineers are not to be stopped by the most rapid torrents. If the horse is young, and not yet trained to this perilous kind of service, the rider gallops him up to the verge of the ravine, then covering the animal's head with his *burka*, he plunges, almost always with impunity, down precipices that are sometimes from ten to fifteen yards deep.

The Circassians are wonderfully expert in the use of firearms, and of their double-edged daggers. Armed only with the latter weapon, they have been known to leap their horses over the Russian bayonets, stab the soldiers, and rout their squared battalions. When they are surrounded in their forts or villages, without any chance of escape, they often sacrifice their wives and children, set fire to their dwellings, and perish in the flames rather than surrender. Like all orientals, they do not abandon their dead and wounded except at the last extremity, and nothing can surpass the obstinacy with which they fight to carry them off from the enemy. It was to this fact, M. de Hell relates, I owed my escape from one of the greatest dangers I ever encountered.

In the month of April, 1841, I explored the military line of the Kuban. On my departure from Stavropol, the governor strongly insisted on giving me an escort; but I refused it, for fear of encumbering my movements, and resolved to trust to my lucky star. It was the season of flood, too, in the Kuban, a period in which the Circassians very seldom cross it. I accepted, however, as a guide, an old Cossack, who had seen more than five-and-twenty years' fighting, and was all over scars; in short, a genuine descendant of the Zaporogues. This man, my interpreter, and a postilion, whom we were to change at each station, formed my whole suite. We were all armed, though there is not much use in such a precaution in a country where one is always attacked either unawares, so that he cannot defend himself, or by superior forces, against which all resistance is but a danger the more. But what of that? There was something imposing and flattering to one's pride in these martial accoutrements. A Tiflis dagger was stuck

in my belt, a heavy rifle thumped against my loins, and my holsters contained an excellent pair of St. Etien pistols. My Cossack was armed with two pistols, a rifle, a Circassian sabre, and a lance. As for my interpreter, an Italian, he was as brave as a Calabrian bandit, and what I prized above all in him was an imperturbable coolness in the most critical positions, and a blind obedience to my orders. For five days we pursued our way pleasantly along the Kuban, without thinking of the danger of our position. The country, broken up by beautiful hills, was covered with rich vegetation. The muddy waters of the Kuban flowed on our left, and beyond the river we saw distinctly the first ranges of the Caucasus. We could even discern the smoke of the Circassian auls rising up amidst the forests.

The weather next morning was cold and rainy, and everything gave token of an unpleasant day. The country before us was quite unlike that we were leaving behind. The road wound tortuously over an immense plain between marshes and quagmires that often rendered it all but impossible to advance. Our morning ride was therefore a dull and silent one. The Cossack had no tales to tell of his warlike feats; he was in bad humour, and never opened his lips except to rap out one of those thundering oaths in which the Russians often indulge. A thin rain beat in our faces; our tired horses slid at every step on the greasy clay soil, and we rode in single file, muffled up in our burkas and bashliks. Towards noon the weather cleared up, the road became less difficult, and towards evening we were but an hour and a half from the last fort on that side of Ekaterinodar. We were then proceeding slowly, without any thought of danger, and I paid no heed to the Cossack, who had halted some distance behind. But our quick-eared guide had heard the sound of hoofs, and in a few seconds he rode up at full speed, shouting with all his might, "The Tcherkesses! the Tcherkesses!" Looking round we saw four mountaineers coming over a hill not far from the road. My plan was instantly formed. The state of our horses rendered any attempt at flight entirely useless; we were still far from the fortress, and, once overtaken, we could not avoid a fight, the chances of which were all against us. The Cossack alone had a sabre, and when once we had discharged our fire-arms it would be all over with us. But I knew that the Cir-

cassians never abandoned their dead and wounded, and it was on this I founded our hope of safety. My orders were quickly given, and we continued to advance at a walk, riding abreast, but sufficiently wide apart to leave each man's movements free. Not a word was uttered by any of us. I had incurred many dangers in the course of my travels, but I had never been in a situation of more breathless anxiety. In less than a minute we distinctly heard the galloping of the mountaineers, and immediately afterwards their balls whizzed past us. My burka was slightly touched, and the shaft of the Cossack's lance was cut in two. The critical moment was come; I gave the word, and we instantly wheeled round, and discharged our pistols at arm's length at our assailants: two of them fell. "Away now, and ride for your lives," I shouted, "the Circassians will not pursue us." Our horses, which had recovered their wind, and were probably inspired by the smell of powder, carried us along at a sweeping pace, and never stopped until we were within sight of the fortress. Exactly what I had foreseen had happened. On the morning after the memorable day the garrison turned out and scoured the country, and I accompanied them to the scene of action. There were copious marks of blood on the sand, and among the sedges on the side of the road we found a shaska, or Circassian sabre, which had been dropped, no doubt, by the enemy. The commanding officer presented it to me, and I have kept it ever since as a remembrance of my perilous interview with the mountaineers. It bears the mark of a ball.

It would be difficult to give any precise idea respecting the religious principles of the various nations of the Caucasus. The charge of idolatry has been alleged against several of them, but we think without any good grounds. Paganism, Christianity, and Muhammadanism, have by turns found access among them, and the result has been an anomalous medley of no clearly-defined doctrines with the most superstitious practices of their early obsolete creeds. The Lesghis and the eastern tribes alone are really Muhammadans. As for the Ossetans, Circassians, Kabardians, and other western tribes, they seem to profess a pure deism, mingled with some Christian and Mussulman notions. It is thought that Christianity was introduced among these people by the celebrated Thamar, Queen

of Georgia, who reigned in the latter part of the twelfth century; but it is much more probable that this was done by the Greek colonies of the Lower Empire, and afterwards by those of the Republic of Genoa in the Crimea. The Tcherkesses to this day entertain a profound reverence for the crosses and old churches of their country, to which they make frequent pilgrimages, and yearly offerings and sacrifices. It seems, too, that the Greek mythology has left numerous traces in Circassia; the story of Saturn, for instance, that of the Titans endeavouring to scale heaven, and several others, are found among many of the tribes. A very marked characteristic of the Circassians is a total absence of religious fanaticism. Pretenders to divine inspiration have always been repulsed by them, and most of them have paid with their lives for their attempts at proselytism. This is not the case on the Caspian side of the mountains, where Schamyl's power is in a great measure based on his religious influence over the tribes.

When two nations are at war, it usually happens that the one is calumniated by the other, and the stronger seeks an apology for its own ambition in blackening the character of its antagonist. Thus the Russians, wishing to make the inhabitants of the Caucasus appear as savages, against whom every means of extermination is allowable, relate the most absurd tales of the ferocious torture inflicted by them on their prisoners. But there is no truth in all this. I have often met military men who have been prisoners in the mountains, and they unanimously testified to the good treatment they had received. The Circassians deal harshly only with those who resist, or who have made several attempts to escape; but in those cases their measures are fully justified by the fear lest the fugitives should convey important topographical information to the Russians. As for the story of the chopped horsehair inserted under the skin of the soles of the feet to hinder the escape of captives, it has been strangely exaggerated by some travellers. I never could hear of more than one prisoner of war who had been thus treated, and this was an army surgeon with whom I had an opportunity of conversing. He had not been previously ill-treated in any way by the mountaineers; but, distracted with the desire for freedom, he had made three attempts to escape, and it was not until

the third that the Tcherkesses had recourse to the terrible expedient of the horsehair. During our stay at the waters of the Caucasus I saw a young Russian woman who had recently been rescued by General Grabbe's detachment. Shortly after our arrival she fled, and returned to the mountains. This fact speaks at least in favour of the gallantry of the Circassians. Indeed, there is no one in the country but well knows the deep respect they profess for the sex. It would be very difficult, if not impossible, to mention any case in which Russian female prisoners have been maltreated by them.

The Circassians have been accustomed from time immemorial to make prisoners of all foreigners who land on their shores without any special warrant or recommendation. This custom has been denounced and censured in every possible way; yet it is not so barbarous as has been supposed. Encompassed by enemies, exposed to incessant attacks, and relying for their defence chiefly on the nature of their country, the jealous care of their independence has naturally compelled the mountaineers to become suspicious, and not to allow any traveller to penetrate their retreats. What proves that this prohibitive measure is by no means the result of a savage temper is, that it is enough to pronounce the name of a chief, no matter who, to be welcomed and treated everywhere with unbounded hospitality. Reassured by this slender evidence of good faith, the mountaineers lay aside their distrust, and think only how they may do honour to the guest of one of their princes.

But another and still graver charge still hangs over the Circassians, namely, their slave-dealing, which has so often provoked the generous indignation of the philanthropists of Europe, and for the abolition of which Russia has been extolled by all journalists. We are certainly far from approving of that hateful trade, in which human beings are bought and sold as merchandise; but we are bound, in justice to the people of Asia, to remark, that there is a wide difference between Oriental slavery and that which exists in Russia, in the French colonies, and in America. In the East, slavery becomes in fact a virtual adoption, which has generally a favourable effect both on the moral and physical weak of the individual. It is a condition by no means implying any sort of degradation, nor has there ever existed between it and

the class of freemen that live of demarcation, beset by pride and prejudice, which is found everywhere else. It would be easy to mention the names of many high dignitaries of Turkey who were originally slaves; indeed, it would be difficult to name one young man of the Caucasus, sold to the Turks, who did not rise to more or less distinction. As for the women, large cargoes of whom still arrive in the Bosphorus in spite of the Russian blockade, they are far from bewailing their lot; on the contrary, they think themselves very fortunate in being able to set out for Constantinople, which offers them a prospect of everything that can fascinate the imagination of a girl of the East. All this, of course, presupposes the absence of those family affections to which we attach so much value; but it must not be forgotten that the tribes of the Caucasus cannot be fairly or soundly judged by the standard of our European notions, but that we must make due allowance for their social state, their manners, and traditions. The sale of women in Circassia is obviously but a substitute and an equivalent for the indispensable preliminaries that elsewhere precede every marriage in the East; with this difference alone, that in the Caucasus, on account of its remoteness, it is an agent who undertakes the pecuniary part of the transaction, and acts as the medium between the girl's relations and him whose lawful wife she is in most cases to become. The parents, it is true, part with their children, and give them up to strangers almost always unknown to them: but they do not abandon them for all that. They keep up a frequent correspondence with them, and the Russians never capture a single Circassian boat in which there are not men and women going to or returning from Constantinople merely to see their children. No one who has been in the Caucasus can be ignorant of the fact that all the families, not excepting even those of high rank, esteem it a great honour to have their children placed out in Turkey. It is to all these relations and alliances, as I may say, between the Circassians and the Turks that the latter owe the great moral influence they still exercise over the tribes of the Caucasus. The name of Turk is always the best recommendation among the mountaineers, and there is no sort of respectful consideration but is evinced towards those who have returned home after passing some years of servitude in

Turkey. After all, the Russians themselves think on this subject precisely as we do, and were it not for potent political considerations, they would not by any means offer impediment to the Caucasian slave-trade. This is proved most manifestly by the proposal, made by a Russian general in 1843, to regulate and ratify this traffic, and carry it on for the benefit of Russia, by granting the Czar's subjects the exclusive privilege of purchasing Circassian slaves. The scheme was abortive, and could not have been otherwise, for it is a monstrous absurdity to compare Russian slavery with that which prevails in Constantinople. Nothing proves more strongly how different are the real sentiments of the Circassians from those imputed to them, than the indignation with which they regard slavery, such as prevails in Russia. I will here relate an anecdote which I doubt not will appear strange to many persons; but I can guarantee its authenticity, since the fact occurred under my own eyes.

A detachment of mountaineers, designed to form a guard of honour for Paskewitch, passed through Rostof on the Don, in 1838. The sultry season was then at its height, and two of the Circassians, going to bathe, laid their clothes in the boat belonging to the custom-house. There was certainly nothing very reprehensible in this; but the *employés* of the customs thought otherwise, threw the men's clothes into the river, and assaulted them with sticks. Immediately there was a tremendous uproar; all the mountaineers flocked to the spot, and threatened to set fire to the town if the amplest satisfaction were not given to their comrades. The inhabitants were seized with alarm, and the director of the customs went in person to the commander of the Circassians, to beseech him not to put his treats in execution; and he backed his entreaties with the offer of a round sum of money for the officer and his men. "Money!" retorted the indignant chieftain, "money! it is good for base-souled, venal Russians! It is good for you, who sell men, women, and children like vile cattle; but among our people, the honour of a man made in the image of God is not bought and sold. Let your men kneel down before my soldiers, and beg their pardon; that is the only reparation we insist on." The chief's demand was complied with, and the peace of the town was immediately

restored. The words we have reported are authentic; they prove that the Tcherkesses do not look on the sale of their children as a traffic, and that in the actual state of their national civilization, that sale cannot be in anywise considered as incompatible with family affections, and the sentiments of honour and humanity.

The Circassian women have been celebrated by so many writers, and their beauty has been made the theme of so many charming descriptions, that we may be allowed to say a few words about them. Unfortunately we are constrained to avow, that the reputation of their charms appears to us greatly exaggerated, and that in person they are much less remarkable than the men. It is true we have not been able to visit any of the great centres of the population; we have not been among the independent tribes, but we have been in several a-uls on the banks of the Kuban, and been entertained in a princely family; but nowhere could we see any of those perfect beauties of whom travellers make such frequent mention. The only thing that really struck us in these mountain girls was the elegance of their shape, and the inimitable grace of their bearing. A Circassian woman is never awkward. Dressed in rags or in brocade, she never fails to assume spontaneously the most noble and picturesque attitudes. In this respect she is incontestably superior to the highest efforts of fascination which Parisian art can achieve.

The great celebrity of the women of the Caucasus appears to have been derived from the bazaars of Constantinople, where the Turks, who are great admirers of their charms, still inquire after them with extreme avidity. But as their notions of beauty are quite different from ours, and relate chiefly to plumpness, and the shape of the feet, it is not at all surprising that the opinions of the Turks have misled travellers. But though the Circassian belles do not completely realize the ideal type dreamed of by Europeans, we are far from denying the brilliant qualities with which nature has evidently endowed them. They are engaging, gracious, and affable towards the stranger, and we can well conceive that their charming hospitality has won for them many an ardent admirer.

Apropos of the conjugal and domestic habits of the Circassians; I will describe an excursion I made along the military

line of the north, eighteen months after my journey to the Caspian Sea.

During my stay at Ekaterinodar, the capital of the country of the Black Sea Cossacks, I heard a great deal about a Tcherkess prince, allied to Russia, and established on the right bank of the Kuban, a dozen versts from the town. I therefore gladly accepted the proposal made to me by the Attaman Zavadofsky to visit the chief, under an escort of an officer and two soldiers. Baron Kloch, of whom I have already spoken, accompanied me. We mounted our horses, armed to the teeth, according to the invariable custom of the country, and in three hours we alighted in the middle of the a-ul. We were immediately surrounded by a crowd of persons, whose looks had nothing in them of welcome; but when they were informed that we were not Russians, but foreigners, and that we were come merely to request a few hours' hospitality of their master, their sour looks were changed for an expression of the frankest cordiality, and they hastened to conduct us to the prince's dwelling.

It was a miserable thatched mud cabin, in front of which we found the noble Tcherkess, lying on a mat, in his shirt, and bare-footed. He received us in the kindest manner, and after complimenting us on our arrival, he proceeded to make his toilette. He sent for his most elegant garments and his most stylish leg-gear, girded on his weapons, which he took care to make us admire, and then led us into the cabin, which served as his abode during the day. The interior was as naked and unfurnished as it could well be. A divan covered with reed matting, a few vessels, and a saddle, were the only objects visible. After we had rested a few moments, the prince begged us to pay a visit to his wife and daughter who had been apprised of our arrival, and were extremely desirous to see us.

These ladies occupied a hut of their own, consisting, like the prince's, of but one room. They rose as we entered, and saluted us very gracefully; then motioning us to be seated, the mother sat down in the Turkish fashion on her divan, whilst her daughter came and leaned gracefully against the sofa on which we had taken our places. When the ceremony of reception was over, we remarked with surprise that the prince had not crossed the threshold, but merely put his head in at the door to answer our

questions and talk with his wife. Our Cossack officer explained the meaning of this singular conduct, telling us that a Circassian husband cannot, without detriment to his honour, enter his wife's apartment during the day. This rule is rigorously observed in all families that make any pretensions to distinction.

The princess's apartment had a little more air of comfort than her husband's. We found in it two large divans with silk cushions embroidered with gold and silver, carpets of painted felt, several trunks, and a very pretty work-basket. A little Russian mirror, and the chief's armorial trophies, formed the ornaments of the walls. But the floor was not boarded; the walls were rough plastered, and two little holes, furnished with shutters, barely served to let a little air into the interior. The princess, who seemed about five and thirty or forty, was not fitted to support the reputation of her countrywomen, and we were by no means dazzled by her charms. Her dress alone attracted our attention. Under a brocaded pelisse with short sleeves, and laced on the seams, she wore a silk chemise, open much lower down than decency could approve. A velvet cap trimmed with silver, smooth plaits of hair, cut heart-shape on the forehead, a white veil fastened on the top of the head, and crossing over the bosom, and lastly, a red shawl thrown carelessly over her lap, completed her toilette. As for her daughter, we thought her charming: she was dressed in a white robe, and a red kazavek confined round the waist; she had delicate

features, a dazzlingly fair complexion, and her black hair escaped in a profusion of tresses from beneath her cap. The affability of the two ladies exceeded our expectations. They asked us a multitude of questions about our journey, our country, and our occupations. Our European costume interested them exceedingly: our straw hats above all excited their especial wonder. And yet there was something cold and impassive in their whole demeanour. It was not until a long curtain falling by accident shut out the princess from our sight that they condescended to smile. After conversing for a little while, we asked permission of the princess to take her likeness, and to sketch the interior of her dwelling, to which she made no objection. When we had made our drawings, a collation was set before us, consisting of fruits and small cheesecakes, to which, for my part, I did not do much honour. In the evening we took our leave, and on coming out of the hut, we found all the inhabitants of the a-ul assembled, their faces beaming with the most sincere goodwill, and every man was eager to shake hands with us before our departure. A numerous body volunteered to accompany us, and the prince himself mounted and rode with us half-way to Ekaterinodar, where we embraced like old acquaintances. The Tcherkess chief turned back to his a-ul, and it was not without a feeling of regret that we spurred our horses in the direction of the capital of the Black Sea Cossacks.

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It is something to say, and not a little to boast of, that the *Sixpenny Magazine* was the means by which one of the most remarkable delineators of real life, through the instrumentality of fiction, that the present age has produced, was first made known to the reading world. Since the advent of the Great Wizard of the North, there has been no popularity by a writer of fiction equal to that which Miss Braddon has achieved. We may go farther than that, and say that even the popularity of the Author of "Waverley" did not equal that of Miss Braddon, if we measure such popularity simply by numbers. The rise and progress of the popularity of Miss Braddon were the same as in the case of Sir Walter Scott, up to a certain point. Both originated in the anonymous; neither the one nor the other was indebted to any adventitious aid for the sudden and wonderful success in each case; and both depended wholly and solely upon the intrinsic merits of the works which they produced. For years, Sir Walter Scott was known, and at the same time unknown, as "the Author of Waverley," until his works were recognised under the generic appellation of the Waverley Novels. Miss Braddon, for a much shorter space of time, was only known as "the Author of Lady Audley's Secret." If Miss Braddon had flourished at the time of Sir Walter Scott, in all probability, if she had desired it, she would have remained under the mysterious designation of "the Author of Lady Audley's Secret;" but if Sir Walter Scott had lived in these days, he could no more have preserved that exciting secret which agitated the world nearly half a century ago, than he could have clipped the wings of that mighty agent we call the Press, and which, by various agencies, at this moment carries out the boast of Puck, and indeed puts a girle round about the earth in forty minutes.

We have said that Miss Braddon was indebted to no adventitious aid for the wondrous popularity into which she so suddenly burst now not very many months ago—and this brings us to the reflection

that popularity such as that which Miss Braddon has secured is a matter much calculated to puzzle speculative philosophy. Is there a subtle essence pervading enlightened thought in the human mind, which, when touched by a certain agency, vibrates through the mind, as it were, of an entire race? One would almost think so considering the circumstances under which Miss Braddon's name became as familiar in people's mouths as a household word. Miss Braddon did indeed find herself famous in the space of one short day; but we apprehend that she herself would be one of the last persons to account for her sudden flight to such an eminence—we mean, of course, that she would be unable to account for it in such a manner as to make the matter clear to ordinary minds. We doubt not that she had that within her own soul which to herself was sufficiently indicative of what she was to attain, but that something could never be communicated to the general world. That general world seemed almost instinctively to elevate Miss Braddon's name into fame the moment that "Lady Audley's Secret," was given to the public; and hence comes the inquiry, difficult to be satisfied, of how did the feeling spread? Almost before the time that is generally considered necessary for the preliminary announcement of a new work, "Lady Audley's Secret" was on everybody's tongue. There had been no laudatory reviews, no system of elaborate publicity carried on, and yet everybody who had read the book was eager in the discussion of its merits, and all who had not read it were as eager for its possession. There is something more in this than that which strikes on the first view, if philosophy could find it out. In Miss Braddon's case, however, it is sufficient to say that she has advanced to the very topmost round of popularity with a rapidity which we believe is wholly unparalleled in literary annals.

We have now before us the latest emanation from Miss Braddon's pen in her last three volume novel, entitled "Henry Dunbar." It has the true ring of the metal which was so attractive in "Lady Audley's Secret." Of course it is sensational, and to those who may be ready to carp at the term, we freely make the admission. There never

* HENRY DUNBAR: The Story of an Outcast. By the author of "Lady Audley's Secret," &c. In Three Volumes. Second Edition. London: John Maxwell & Co., 122, Fleet-street.

was a more senseless outcry raised than that which has been attempted to be got up against what has been designated sensational writing. Do the cavillers know what they are objecting to? If we were to tie them down to consistency, where could they stop? In the case of strict consistency in them, what would become of their Shakspeare? We tremble on their account to think. The objector who would frown down "Lady Audley's Secret" because it is sensational must also put his veto upon "Hamlet," upon "Othello," upon "Macbeth," and upon every play that Shakspeare wrote. The fact is the objectors to sensational writing, without knowing it, have attempted to set their faces against the very life and soul of romance. They would have everything tame, commonplace, and lifeless, like the adventures of a man who pursues the even tenor of his way without an incident and without an excitement. Such a biography would probably be true enough to nature, but nobody would care to read and study it, simply because with the ordinary use of the visual organs such a life could be read a hundred times a day at a glance. But the advocates of tameness, and by consequence the opponents of sensation, seem never to remember the axiom that truth is stranger often than fiction. Why, it is that very truth that Miss Braddon has made the substratum of her novels. Our criminal annals are simply a record of those startling truths which are so much and so often stranger than fiction. It comes to this, then, that the cavillers at sensational fiction are simply railing against truth as the foundation upon which the novelist should build his story.

But the opponents of this school of literature, which Miss Braddon may be said to have founded, probably know the hopeless nature of their opposition. Unlike an ordinary assault in material warfare, every attack they make upon the object of their opposition appears to strengthen it and make it the more lasting. *Eccce signum*—"Henry Dunbar."

The first edition of this novel was, we believe, exhausted on the very first morning of its issue—a fact in itself that is unprecedented in the publishing trade, as we understand. This of course argues a popularity that is all but universal in this country; but our wonder and admiration increase when we find that Miss

Braddon's fame is not confined to Great Britain; through the merit of the book under consideration, her fame has extended to France. The novel in another form had reached the reading public of France previously, and its effect on them was nearly as marked as that which "Lady Audley's Secret" had been on the people of England. This is the more remarkable, because the French are essentially a novel-reading and a novel-producing people. Their novels are nearly all sensational—especially so the best. In such a field as this, then, Miss Braddon has been honoured with a success which, measuring it by demand, is equal to that achieved by the elder Dumas. "Henry Dunbar," in the form to which we have referred, was so eagerly sought after, that the supply could not keep pace with the demand. Of course we may assume that in its new form it will be, or has been, simultaneously issued in Paris, as it will be in the other great capitals of Europe.

Now, what is the secret of this wonderful and widely-extended success? It is not in style, because Miss Braddon clearly has never aimed at a distinctive style in her writings. Indeed, the question of style alone is not calculated to secure an extended popularity. Miss Braddon's style is simple and unaffected, and has no lofty aim which might lead into the obscure. It is evidently her marvellous imaginative power which has taken such a hold upon the English people and the French, too. It is this power which is more conspicuous in her writings than is that of creation of character. Miss Braddon in this particular admits of just comparison with the French novelists. They imagine wonderful scenes and situations, startling, attractive, and always novel, and this will partially account for Miss Braddon's popularity in Paris.

"Henry Dunbar" is in its character similar to, and yet widely different from, "Lady Audley's Secret" and "Aurora Floyd." Hitherto Miss Braddon would seem to have devoted her powers to the development of female character. In all her previous novels the female element has been the most prominent; but in "Henry Dunbar," as the title would lead one to infer, the case is reversed. The story is that of an outcast, and it is as intense as it is powerfully constructed. In all Miss Braddon's novels there is one ruling, paramount incident which is con-

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It is something to say, and not a little to boast of, that the *Sixpenny Magazine* was the means by which one of the most remarkable delineators of real life, through the instrumentality of fiction, that the present age has produced, was first made known to the reading world. Since the advent of the Great Wizard of the North, there has been no popularity by a writer of fiction equal to that which Miss Braddon has achieved. We may go farther than that, and say that even the popularity of the Author of "Waverley" did not equal that of Miss Braddon, if we measure such popularity simply by numbers. The rise and progress of the popularity of Miss Braddon were the same as in the case of Sir Walter Scott, up to a certain point. Both originated in the anonymous; neither the one nor the other was indebted to any adventitious aid for the sudden and wonderful success in each case; and both depended wholly and solely upon the intrinsic merits of the works which they produced. For years, Sir Walter Scott was known, and at the same time unknown, as "the Author of Waverley," until his works were recognised under the generic appellation of the Waverley Novels. Miss Braddon, for a much shorter space of time, was only known as "the Author of Lady Audley's Secret." If Miss Braddon had flourished at the time of Sir Walter Scott, in all probability, if she had desired it, she would have remained under the mysterious designation of "the Author of Lady Audley's Secret;" but if Sir Walter Scott had lived in these days, he could no more have preserved that exciting secret which agitated the world nearly half a century ago, than he could have clipped the wings of that mighty agent we call the Press, and which, by various agencies, at this moment carries out the boast of Puck, and indeed puts a girdle round about the earth in forty minutes.

We have said that Miss Braddon was indebted to no adventitious aid for the wondrous popularity into which she so suddenly burst now not very many months ago—and this brings us to the reflection

that popularity such as that which Miss Braddon has secured is a matter much calculated to puzzle speculative philosophy. Is there a subtle essence pervading enlightened thought in the human mind, which, when touched by a certain agency, vibrates through the mind, as it were, of an entire race? One would almost think so considering the circumstances under which Miss Braddon's name became as familiar in people's mouths as a household word. Miss Braddon did indeed find herself famous in the space of one short day; but we apprehend that she herself would be one of the last persons to account for her sudden flight to such an eminence—we mean, of course, that she would be unable to account for it in such a manner as to make the matter clear to ordinary minds. We doubt not that she had that within her own soul which to herself was sufficiently indicative of what she was to attain, but that something could never be communicated to the general world. That general world seemed almost instinctively to elevate Miss Braddon's name into fame the moment that "Lady Audley's Secret," was given to the public; and hence comes the inquiry, difficult to be satisfied, of how did the feeling spread? Almost before the time that is generally considered necessary for the preliminary announcement of a new work, "Lady Audley's Secret" was on everybody's tongues. There had been no laudatory reviews, no system of elaborate publicity carried on; and yet everybody who had read the book was eager in the discussion of its merits, and all who had not read it were as eager for its possession. There is something more in this than that which strikes on the first view, if philosophy could find it out. In Miss Braddon's case, however, it is sufficient to say that she has advanced to the very topmost round of popularity with a rapidity which we believe is wholly unparalleled in literary annals.

We have now before us the latest emanation from Miss Braddon's pen in her last three volume novel, entitled "Henry Dunbar." It has the true ring of the metal which was so attractive in "Lady Audley's Secret." Of course it is sensational, and to those who may be ready to carp at the term, we freely make the admission. There never

* HENRY DUNBAR: The Story of an Outcast. By the author of "Lady Audley's Secret," &c. In Three Volumes. Second Edition. London: John Maxwell & Co., 122, Fleet-street.

was a more senseless outcry raised than that which has been attempted to be got up against what has been designated sensational writing. Do the cavillers know what they are objecting to? If we were to tie them down to consistency, where could they stop? In the case of strict consistency in them, what would become of their Shakspeare? We tremble on their account to think. The objector who would frown down "Lady Audley's Secret" because it is sensational must also put his veto upon "Hamlet," upon "Othello," upon "Macbeth," and upon every play that Shakspeare wrote. The fact is the objectors to sensational writing, without knowing it, have attempted to set their faces against the very life and soul of romance. They would have everything tame, commonplace, and lifeless, like the adventures of a man who pursues the even tenor of his way without an incident and without an excitement. Such a biography would probably be true enough to nature, but nobody would care to read and study it, simply because with the ordinary use of the visual organs such a life could be read a hundred times a day at a glance. But the advocates of tameness, and by consequence the opponents of sensation, seem never to remember the axiom that truth is stranger often than fiction. Why, it is that very truth that Miss Braddon has made the substratum of her novels. Our criminal annals are simply a record of those startling truths which are so much and so often stranger than fiction. It comes to this, then, that the cavillers at sensational fiction are simply railing against truth as the foundation upon which the novelist should build his story.

But the opponents of this school of literature, which Miss Braddon may be said to have founded, probably know the hopeless nature of their opposition. Unlike an ordinary assault in material warfare, every attack they make upon the object of their opposition appears to strengthen it and make it the more lasting. *Ecce signum*—"Henry Dunbar."

The first edition of this novel was, we believe, exhausted on the very first morning of its issue—a fact in itself that is unprecedented in the publishing trade, as we understand. This of course argues a popularity that is all but universal in this country; but our wonder and admiration increase when we find that Miss

Braddon's fame is not confined to Great Britain; through the merit of the book under consideration, her fame has extended to France. The novel in another form had reached the reading public of France previously, and its effect on them was nearly as marked as that which "Lady Audley's Secret" had been on the people of England. This is the more remarkable, because the French are essentially a novel-reading and a novel-producing people. Their novels are nearly all sensational—especially so the best. In such a field as this, then, Miss Braddon has been honoured with a success which, measuring it by demand, is equal to that achieved by the elder Dumas. "Henry Dunbar," in the form to which we have referred, was so eagerly sought after, that the supply could not keep pace with the demand. Of course we may assume that in its new form it will be, or has been, simultaneously issued in Paris, as it will be in the other great capitals of Europe.

Now, what is the secret of this wonderful and widely-extended success? It is not in style, because Miss Braddon clearly has never aimed at a distinctive style in her writings. Indeed, the question of style alone is not calculated to secure an extended popularity. Miss Braddon's style is simple and unaffected, and has no lofty aim which might lead into the obscure. It is evidently her marvellous imaginative power which has taken such a hold upon the English people and the French, too. It is this power which is more conspicuous in her writings than is that of creation of character. Miss Braddon in this particular admits of just comparison with the French novelists. They imagine wonderful scenes and situations, startling, attractive, and always novel, and this will partially account for Miss Braddon's popularity in Paris.

"Henry Dunbar" is in its character similar to, and yet widely different from, "Lady Audley's Secret" and "Aurora Floyd." Hitherto Miss Braddon would seem to have devoted her powers to the development of female character. In all her previous novels the female element has been the most prominent; but in "Henry Dunbar," as the title would lead one to infer, the case is reversed. The story is that of an outcast, and it is as intense as it is powerfully constructed. In all Miss Braddon's novels there is one ruling, paramount incident which is con-

stantly before the reader, but which he does not clearly see until he has finished the book. This consummate art is very conspicuous in "Henry Dunbar." The great secret is constantly before the reader, and yet he is constantly self-deluded. He never guesses the real secret until he is actually put in possession of it; on the contrary, he believes it to be something widely different from the reality. Probably one secret of Miss Braddon's popularity is, that it is manifest to the reader at once that she has got an interesting story to tell. There is no writing for mere writing's sake in any of her books. Every sentence seems necessary to the advancement of the narrative, the sequel to which is kept steadily in view.

The story of "Henry Dunbar" is as simple as could be well conceived, and yet there is the element of mystery so artfully thrown over the whole that the interest at times reaches almost to the painful. But so simple is this mystery that almost one word would unravel it.

It is not for us to utter that word, and we should think that the appeal which Miss Braddon on this point makes in her brief preface will be generally respected by those into whose hands these volumes may fall for critical review.

"Henry Dunbar," throughout the season, will, unquestionably, be a fertile subject of conversation. Its merits will be canvassed by thousands of gratified readers who, we venture to predict, will all agree on one point, and that is, that high as the tension of sensation which Miss Braddon is enabled to command, she seems to possess the rare faculty of being always original and always fresh. Her sensation has never been thought of before; she is the originator of her particular school. In welcoming, therefore, the appearance of "Henry Dunbar," it is with no small satisfaction to ourselves that we again chronicle the fact that Miss Braddon made her first *début* as a powerful Novelist in the pages of the *Sixpenny Magazine*.

THE FAMILY BUTLER.

IMPOSSIBLE to approach with too grave a step the consideration of a functionary so important as the Family Butler. Even footmen are of the populace; baptized, more or less indelibly, with the waters of the kennel. But the butler is a man so many degrees upraised above his origin, as to have cast aside his nature, and in every sense of the word to have forgotten himself. A renegade to gutter-baptism, he has gradually achieved greatness, passing all human understanding,—even his own.

His essential distinction is to be "highly respectable." The family butler is one of the outward and visible graces of every family qualified to call itself a family. A footman is only a slovenly half-and-half appendage of gentility. People who live in houses keep a footman; people who reside in mansions superadd a butler, with second, third, or fourth footmen, as the case may be. But the

butler is indispensable; i.e. indispensable to a "family,"—and "a mansion." Saving for his presence therein, who would there be to drink the last three glasses out of every bottle of port—the last two out of every bottle of sherry, and the first of every bottle of Nantes or liqueur? Who would there be to detect an oversight in the brewer's bill of seven-pence-halfpenny to his master's disadvantage; and exact at the same time a mulct of five-and-twenty per cent. in his own favour? Who would there be to complain of the badness of the broad-cloth in the liveries sent home from the tailor's; or interpolate in the bill an item of an odd waistcoat or two, furnished to himself?

The butler may be said to represent the Upper House in a great Britishly constituted establishment. The servants' hall stands for the Commons;—the steward's or housekeeper's room for the

Lords; master or mistress for the throne. No bill passes to the sign-manual of the latter, without having progressed through the ordeal of the former two.

The butler is pretty sure to be at once his master's master, and his master's servants' master. He is too powerful over the supplies not to make his authority respected. If factiously opposed by the domestics, or fractiously by their proprietor, he contrives to throw the whole weight and labour of the state upon the shoulders of the latter; and the whole weight and labour of everything else into the hands of the former. When Louis the Fourteenth, in pursuance of his state maxim, "*l'état c'est moi*," took it into his head to become his own minister, Louvois was careful to fling into the portfolio such an agglomeration of state papers, and complication of public business, that, at the close of a few days, his Majesty was glad to cry for mercy, and beg the cabinet council to do his work for him, as in duty bound.

So is it with the adroit butler, on finding his lord or master impertinently bent upon "looking into things." The cellar-book,—the plate-list—and every other list—(oh, list!)—committed to his administration, is made to assume a degree of mysterious complexity defying the decipherment of Babbage.

Pipes of port, hogsheads of claret, cases of champagne, gallons of spirituous liquors, are unaccountably added up, subtracted, and divided, by the rule of three and the rule of contrary, into Babylonian confusion; such as worse confounds the confusion of the proprietor of all this intolerable quantity of sack. In the end, he throws it up as a bad job; and finally entreats the family butler will be so very obliging as to cheat him on, in peace.

The butler, though, according to the plausibilities of civilized life, the booziest member of the establishment, is expected to be the most sober-looking. A peculiar decency of vesture and gesture is required of him. Something of the cut of a county member; something exceedingly square-toed and solemn,—is the complement extern most in vogue for the decanter of port.

But, though sober-looking as a judge, the butler should have a comely aspect. He should look well-fed and uncareworn. There should be indiction in his countenance that matters in his master's house

move upon castors:—that the weekly bills and refractory knife-cleaners are duly discharged; and that everything like an impertinent rejoinder is as carefully bottled as the Burgundy.

He must have an air of aptitude and decision, and a tone of authoritative good breeding. It is part of his business to take the guests out of the hands of the footmen, and deliver them in proper order to his master or mistress; tasks to be accomplished with something of the disdainful deference of a Lord Chamberlain.

It may be observed that the butler is almost always at daggers-drawn with his lady; who is apt to consider him as a troublesome, officious personage; sure to quarrel with the lady's maid for being too late at meals, and to grudge the housekeeper her rations of sherry and ratafia for creams and jellies.

A butler is not the only public functionary who entertains an inordinate respect for property, as the sole criterion of human merit; or who holds the only book worth speaking of, to be a banker's. But his opinion on that point is decided; and so far from admitting that

Learning is better than house or land,

he respects the proprietor of a cow-shed more than a senior wrangler. The three things he most detests to see at his master's table are, a bottle of the old Madeira he keeps for his private drinking, a poor relation, and an author. It puts him out of his calculations, indeed, to find every now and then, a new novel announced by a Lady Clara, or a new poem by a Lord John; for he owns "he can't abide to hear of the nobility descending to such low-lived things."

There are, of course, as many classes of butlers in town and country as there are of London men and country gentlemen. But it may suffice to consider two species of the genus; fierce extremes, such as the butler of Russell and the butler of Grosvenor Squares,—"alike, but oh! how different!"—dissimilar in aspect and aspirations as a Guineaman and a Hindoo.

The butler of Russell Square is an obese, hazy-eyed personage; declining in years and the corners of his mouth; sullen in his disposition, yet to his superiors submissively spoken;—having an eye to the main chance and to Mrs. Dobinson's prim-visaged maid.

His master, Mr. Dobinson, of Russell

Square, is a thriving stockbroker; rich enough to be a prompt paymaster, and consequently to take the liberty of examining his own accounts; a sufficient pretext for his butler to regard him as a natural enemy, and to do his spiriting as urgently as Caliban.

Scrupulously punctual in the discharge of his duties, so as to escape jobation, Jobson takes a revengeful delight in the wry face which announces that a bottle of wine is corked; or when the man in authority, after finding fault with the successive carving-knives, is forced to plead guilty to the toughness of the sirloin that smokes upon his board.

In all principles of gastronomy such a butler is a Pagan. He dresses the salad to be eaten at seven, early in the afternoon, and places it in a sunny window in company with the Sauterne and Moselle, which he is careful not to put into the wine-coolers till the last minute; and in the frostiest weather leaves the claret to catch cold on a stone floor in a damp passage.

"Jobson is the steadiest man in the world,—Jobson is a man in whom I have implicit confidence," is Mr. Dobinson's continual certificate in favour of one whose voice is so sonorous at family prayers. Not the smallest peccadillo of the livery was he ever known to pass over. "I never heerd of such doings in a reg'lar establishment," is the grand arcanum of his form of government. The words "reg'lar establishment" have all the charm, from *his* lips, that the words "British Constitution" obtain in the ears of a Conservative constituency.

Next to opulence, he reverences "reg'larly,"—or rather he accepts "reg'larly" as an indication of opulence. Most people well to do in the world are "reg'lar;"—fixed stars, while your dashing, flashing, smashing meteors of fashionable life glitter for a moment, and are no more seen. Mr. Jobson would not have entered the service of a stockbroker, but that Dobinson had a very good character from his last butler, as being "the most reg'lar gentleman he ever lived with,—punctoal to a second." Without such a certificate, Mr. Jobson would not have taken him; and the butler has consequently a right to be displeased and mistrustful, when he finds the "punctoal" gentleman too late for dinner.

The butler, himself being the most sedentary of created slaves, has, of

course, no indulgence for gadding. The coachman must drive to thrive; the footman flies to rise. But the family butler remains fixed in the family mansion from week's end to week's end, like a goldfish in its globe.

The utmost extent of air-taking in which he can indulge, is by keeping the street-door open, with respectful deference, till the carriages of departing visitors have reached the angle of the square; the utmost stretch of sociability he is able to enjoy, consists in a game of cribbage with some brother butler of a next-door neighbour, when the Dobinsons dine out, or visit the theatre.

Even then, his companionability is of far from a cheerful nature. Habitual taciturnity has fixed its gripe upon him. His voice is modified so as to give short answers to his master, and long reprimands to the livery; and when Mr. Corkscrew, of No. 45, discusses with him a glass of stiff punch and the state of the times, he expands mechanically into murmurs; complains that "Dobinson is a prying fellow, as wants to do the gentleman," and ministers as "shirkin' fellows as wants to do the people." Conviviality only renders him grumpier and grumpier. John Thomas is gay in his cups. But the butler remains sullen in his punch; fancying, perhaps, that a dogged humour is the nearest approach to sobriety.

A booziness, meanwhile, become almost constitutional, is his guarantee against committing himself by overt acts of ebriety. The man who is never quite sober, rarely becomes quite drunk. It is in vain that the Johns and Thomases who smart under his pragmatismal jurisdiction, flatter themselves that, some day or other, Mr. Jobson and the coffee-tray will tumble together into the drawing-room, after a dinner party for which a dozen of wine has been decanted, with the usual butlerian diminutions. His accustomed minuet step becomes somewhat more of a *pas grave* for the wine he has swallowed; and their own transgressions lie as much exposed as ever to jobation, or rather, Jobson-ation.

"I should like to know, Thomas, when you ever see'd *me* overtaken by liquor in a manner unbecoming a reg'lar family!" is still his cry; to say nothing of the private lectures he bestows upon a young Cherubino of a Dobinsonian page, convicted of saying soft things to the under nurserymaid over the iron-spiked palings

of the square; for Mr. J. "never heard of no such doings in a reg'lar family!"

By dint of maudlin tears shed over family sermons on Sunday afternoons, and plausibility all the week and all the year round, Mr. Jobson gradually becomes to be regarded as the Lord Angelo of family butlers. Dobinson himself stands in awe of his virtue and sobriety—as a man "what wouldn't wrong his employers of a penny," or admit "an appetite rather to bread than stone."

Even when, one fine day, a faded, ragged, middle-aged woman brings to the area-gate a Jobsonian miniature, and when refused a trifling sum to furnish an apprentice-fee for the poor half-starved lad, is provoked into enlarging upon back-slidings committed by the highly respectable man in blue broadcloth and black silk stockings at a period when his round shoulders were graced with tags, and his silken hose were cotton, her charges are dismissed as frivolous and vexatious by Mrs. Dobinson and her prim-visaged maid.

In vain does the miserable woman produce duplicates of silver forks, alleged by the butler to have been lost by careless footmen; or silver spoons, for the disappearance of which suspected kitchen-maids have been dismissed. Dobinson has unlimited faith in his family butler. The vile woman has evidently been suborned to belie him. Jobson is such an attached creature—Jobson is such a worthy man! It would be impossible for the household to go on "reg'larly" but for the superintendence of Jobson.

Jobson is consequently voted impeccable, and the wicked woman conveyed to the station-house. As certain bankers continue to be the most upright, honourable, and confidential men in the city, till the morning after the appearance of their names in the *Gazette*, so does the respectable butler continue to be respectable so long as he is able to keep his footing, and take thought what his master shall eat, what his master shall drink, and where-withal he shall be clothed. The keystone of the domestic arch, his services are indispensable to keep the family "reg'lar."

The butler of Grosvenor-square, on the other hand, provided there is neither house-steward nor groom of the chambers over him to check his aspiring genius, is a more airy character than his eastern collaborator. Unless in archiepiscopal, episcopal, or very ancient Tory families, elderly butlers, like old china, are out of date. Bonzes and josses went out with

the Regency; and young servants and modern porcelain came in with Reform.

Even an old nurse is obsolete, unless in the form of a privy councillor, a G.C.B., or a Welsh judge; and the fashionable butler is often on the sunny side of thirty; a man having too much regard for his complexion to infringe upon the wine-cellar, and too much interest in his slenderness to vulgarize on ale. An occasional glass of claret and sip of liqueur suffices the well-bred gentleman, who prides himself upon the graceful air with which he precedes the marchioness, with noiseless step and unembarrassed respiration; and keeps his shape carefully within compass of that of his lord and master, so as to enable him to make suit-able arrangements with his lordship's valet, for his cast-off wardrobe.

The Whittingham of Grosvenor-square would not be mistered for the world! Mister is, in fact, a name unfamiliar in "his lordship's establishment;" and the extremely gentlemanly gentleman, in Wellington boots or varnished pumps, who walks a-tiptoe like Diomed to announce his master's guests, would be disgusted to find himself thus conspicuously plebeianized. "Ask Whittingham!" "Go, Whittingham!" carries with it a sort of confidential familiarity from the lips of his lovely lady, which makes him hold it at least as ennobling as the Guelphic order.

In lieu of the *Times*, Whittingham reads the *Morning Post*, and is deeply versed in fashionable novels. In such a place as *his*, the porter being sole respondent at the door during her ladyship's absence, Whittingham has his afternoons to himself; and divides them between his toilet, light literature, flirting with the French maid, compounding scandal with my lord's own man, and wondering how people can have the impertinence to send in bills except at Christmas.

Not that he allows anything in the shape of a small account to molest his lord or lady. Whittingham knows better than to make himself disagreeable to his employers by appearing with a slip of paper in his hand. Standing accounts, such as those of the marquis, are, like the marquis's peerage, too old in date to be trifled with. No chance of per-centage from *them*; and they are accordingly placed in a drawer in the hall-table till the end of the season, when the porter uses them to light his fires through the winter. It is only through the vulgar medium of the

post that claimants on a fashionable marquis have a chance of obtaining attention between the month of January and the December next ensuing.

The Grosvenor-square butler is as trip-some in wit as in demeanour—something of a conversation-man. All that is best of the *bon mots* of the clubs descends through *him* from his lordship's lips to the second table; and he is careful to convey to my lady's woman the earliest intelligence of a clever debate, an interesting division, or a change of ministry.

Whittingham is almost as much a fixture, however, as Mr. Jobson. Saving that he has the use of his lordship's stall at the Opera during Ascot or Goodwood week, he indulges in no vulgar dissipations; and wonders, with an air of fastidiousness, admirably copied from that of my lady, how people can show their faces in the park.

Whittingham is too well bred a man to be on uneasy terms with any one residing under his lordship's roof. But if an antipathy could ruffle the surface of so smooth a nature, it would be Florimond, the French cook. He really cannot stand Monsieur Florimond. How is the subordination of the cellar to be kept up with a cook who insists upon champagne to boil his hams and stew kidneys—Chably for his truffles and salmon—and mulled claret for himself; besides cutting out the butler with Mademoiselle Amélie, and the stall at the Opera.

Whittingham has no intention of growing grey or corpulent in the service. Though the nature of his lordship's pursuits at Tattersall's and Newmarket is such as to render the profits of his house unworthy of mention, (unless a hundred a year from the wine-merchant, added to the butler's wages of seventy guineas, should be deemed sufficient to enable him to lay by for the benefit of younger children,) he has perfect reliance upon being properly provided for by my lord. A small place in the Household would be the very thing for him; something enabling him to wear ruffles and a sword by his side on gala days, as a fringe on the hem of royalty. As to the Customs, Excise, or Post-office, he would "beg to decline." Whittingham has been used to the society of gentlemen.

How different are these specimens

of the family butler from the ancient serving-man of the old English gentleman—the *bouteillier* or butler, who presided over the *paneterie*, or pantry; who bottled his master's sherris-sack or malvoisie for his master's drinking, instead of his own; and brewed his master's ale, not only for his own drinking, but for the refreshment of all having claims on his master's hospitality; who took pride in the coals and blankets distributed to the poor; wept tears of joy when an heir was born to the family, and tears of sorrow when its elders were borne to the grave. The heir was *his*, the ale was *his*, as one might guess by the tenderness with which he dealt with both.

His voice was never heard in chiding, save when some excess on the part of his master had brought on a fit of the gout, or some imprudence on the part of his lady boded ill to his nurslings. With *him*, service was an inheritance. He knew that the children to come after him would be dear to the children to come after his master; and for the general sake, as for the sake of conscience, his master's substance was sacred in his sight.

Such a butler was necessarily the head of a peaceable and well governed household. It is true he was a dunce. In *his* time, newspapers, daily or weekly, were unthumbed in the pantry; and, as to troubling himself about what was doing in the House, he regarded Parliament as a solemn portion of Church and State, to be toasted at public dinners, and prayed for in parish churches—not to be profaned by lips unclean.

But the wine he bottled was sounder, and the ale he brewed ripened more readily, than in these our times. In table-service his attendance was impartial. He was not a bit more obsequious to my lord, the country neighbour, than to the needy hanger-on of the family; or, if a difference of assiduity were perceptible, it was in favour of the parson of the parish.

But alas! the gods are departing; and stout old-fashioned serving-men seem also on the go. It is difficult to say what has become of them; whether they have gone into the reformed parliament, or the church, or the almshouse. But unless in the pages of Richardson or Steele, it is difficult to meet with even the prototype of a FAMILY BUTLER.

BARRY O'BYRNE.

By the Author of "Sir Victor's Choice," "Lady Lorne," &c.

CHAPTER XVII.

LAURA BRAY DOES SOME ELOQUENT SPECIAL PLEADING ON BEHALF OF MRS. BARRY O'BYRNE.

THE "world" had given over talking of that "curious report" for some weeks, and even Theynham had ceased to make it the principal topic. The former had been given other food for its mind, in the shape of one or two successfully carried out attempts, of the kind report said had been baffled in that matter of the Countess of Kilcorran. And Theynham had a more absorbing anxiety. They said that Vyvyan, the greatest flirt of the callous order in the garrison, had utterly succumbed to Laura Bray's charms, and was quite "serious" in his intentions. Until the truth of this saying could be ascertained, Laura Bray and Laurence Vyvyan were the prominent features of interest in that rather flat social landscape. If the match came off eventually, it would upset a good many profound theories which had been promulgated—amongst others, a very generally well received one, viz., that "Miss Laura Bray was too great a flirt for any man to think of making her his wife." Under the influence of this absorbing interest in the home department, the bog adventure and poor Vesper's sad end had ceased for some weeks to roll trippingly off the tongue of scandal.

Laura was the last to come in and seat herself at the breakfast-table one morning. After looking at the letters which were laid on her plate, with the lax interest one is apt to bestow after seventeen upon the fervid outpourings of one's feminine correspondents, she asked her brother for the advertisement sheet of the *Times*, "to see if any one she knew was born or married;" and was refused the boon by him, on the grounds that "it wasn't good for her to have what she wanted, and that she'd much better improve her mind by perusing the leading article."

She took the sheet he extended to her as he spoke, with the laughing, good-tempered, ready mirth that always characterized the bearing of these sisters and brother to one another, and the thought that she was too good for Vyvyan rose to

Gerald's mind, as he watched her, pressing her smooth, fair cheek on her hand, as her frank, blue eyes idly scanned the columns before her. "Too good and too intelligent for Laurence Vyvyan," he thought, affectionately. And even as he thought it, the fair, smooth cheek paled suddenly, the frank, blue eyes dilated with a strange horror, and she flung the paper from her with a cry of anguish and pain.

"Lolly! my child!"
"Read it, Gerald!" she almost shrieked—"read it! Arrest of Barry O'Byrne, on—oh, my God!—a charge of murder!"

And then they forgot her, and her almost unbearable agony, as Gerald found and read, in a startled, broken voice, that Barry O'Byrne had been arrested on a charge of having murdered Miss Feltome, and that he was now lodged like a common criminal in the county jail.

The statement of these horrible facts was placed in the paper in the brief, terse way such statements are placed when news is plentiful and space scanty. "The occurrence had caused a most painful sensation in the neighbourhood," the announcement wound up by declaring, "and the prisoner was fully committed to take his trial at the next assizes."

They could none of them say anything. They could only—that family with whom Barry O'Byrne had been such a friend and favourite—they could only, when the note of his dire downfall and disgrace was first sounded amongst them, give vent to pitying exclamations and interjections of astonishment. They could not think, much less speak, coherently. They could only read it over and over again, each one with the faint, unexpressed hope that Gerald had omitted some saving clause, or mistaken the sense of some phrase. Horatia read it with the glibness that came of her quick sympathy with her sister; Mrs. Bray, with tears—kind, loving tears, in which there was no blame; Mr. Bray, with a running fire of nods and "dear, dears." Only Laura turned away from it with a faint shuddering protest—only Laura refused to realize by a second glance what the first, and her brother's tones, had made fatally clear already.

The following day they received a missive from Mrs. O'Byrne. She was ill,

she told them—broken-hearted, afflicted with hideous fears of divers kinds. Added to this she was alone, for what were servants? She entreated that Laura would come to her at once if her (Laura's) professed friendship of former days had been the genuine thing it seemed, and had in truth been given as much to Mrs. O'Byrne as to the "guilty man." In the event of Laura's refusing to accede to her request, Mrs. O'Byrne added that she should indeed believe that there was some semblance of truth in the poetical assertion of "friendship being an empty sound,"—she had long been painfully aware that "love was an idle dream." Her letter ended with a touch of true womanly pathos that went straight through the crust of acquired indifference to the heart she addressed. "I am in great sorrow," she wrote, "and I want to see the face of one who knew me before it came upon me. You will come to me, dear Laura, for I am very lonely!" Laura read this concluding sentence with a broken voice, but she quickly steadied it back to indignant firmness by reverting to the passage in which Mrs. O'Byrne spoke of her husband as a "guilty man."

"He can't be guilty," Floratia said at last; "I don't believe for one moment."

"Guilty!" Laura broke in passionately; "how can you speak as if the possibility existed? Papa," she continued, going up and resting on his knee, and putting her arms round his neck like the fond, privileged, pet darling she was,— "Papa, don't let us be summer friends; let us go at once, and see and try to comfort the poor woman he married, who must be in dire tribulation now. Don't say 'no,' don't be harsh and refuse a request of mine for the first time in my life, that will hurt me dreadfully if it is not granted."

"Go to her! go to Ireland! Lolly, my impetuous darling——"

"No, I'm not 'impetuous,' papa, that isn't my character at all; don't—don't argue and stand on nothings now that it's a question of life and death, and she has made such an appeal. Yes! go to Ireland; why not? Show them that we know the lie to be the lie it is; think of the little thing it will be to us to go, and of the great thing it will be to them to see us; think of her solitary misery in that strange place, and of how we have known them when they were so differently circumstanced; think of all that, dear papa, and of a hundred other things that my

poor tongue can't utter now, but that your own good heart will tell you, and go to Ireland and take me."

"I will, Lolly," he said, smoothing her fair hair off her pale, tear-stained face; "I will, Lolly, and God grant better tidings may meet us when we get there."

It was unpractical and imprudent of him as a parent, perhaps, to give this promise to his child. But he was more famed for a certain kindly Christianity and gentlemanly readiness to do kindnesses than for being practical and prudent. Laura's plea had touched him deeply. He was not one who could grasp a man's hand in good fellowship one day and hear with indifference the next of the probability of his being hung. And though Laura had made her plea principally on behalf of Barry's wife, Mr. Bray tacitly accepted the fact, and did not seem to think it deserving of censure, that she would not have been so eloquent had Mrs. Barry O'Byrne been Mrs. anybody else.

No sooner was it a settled thing that they should go than Laura went away to make preparations for her journey, acting on the fixed idea young ladies always have on such occasions, that the sooner they begin to fuss and pack the sooner the journey will be accomplished. When Horatia rose to follow and assist Laura in doing nothing, Gerald arrested her and carried her off into another room for a private conference.

"Look here," he began; "it's all very well, and I'm deuced sorry myself, but you know Lolly isn't going to see Mrs. Barry O'Byrne."

"She thinks she is, at any rate," Horatia replied.

"Well, but she isn't, whatever she may think; it's Barry she is in reality going to comfort and console; and though, poor fellow! it's heart-breaking to think of his position, the plan seems to me a bad one. I don't think she ought to go."

"Let her go, Gerald," his sister responded heartily; "she may be deceiving herself, and in reality it most likely is as you say, that it's Barry she is going to with the hope of comforting him; but let her think that it is his wife—she does think so, poor child, and it would be cruel to undeceive her and thwart her."

"I won't do either; but it is a dangerous experiment, and no good that I can see can possibly result from it. I believe as you say, that poor dear Lolly

does deceive herself, but all the same, it will be patent to other people that she is spoony on poor Barry if she rushes off alone with my father."

"Alone! ah, had I not better go as well?" Horatia asked; "there can be nothing said or thought if we both go to Mrs. O'Byrne now she has such trials; dear Lolly will accept the amended plan without a suspicion of the cause of it: ignorance is bliss in her case; she does honestly think that it's friendship pure and simple for Barry and great pity for his wife that makes her want to go."

So Mr. Bray and his two daughters went away on their mission of mercy. And the cause that had called them forth was felt to be so terrible that the proceeding gave rise to little beyond approving comments on the kindness which led them to the side of their former acquaintance, Miss Henderson, in her hour of need.

The better tidings that Mr. Bray had prayed God might grant did not meet them when they reached Irish soil. They gained but little information in Cork, though the incarceration of the accused in that city made his alleged crime the all-absorbing topic of conversation. Miss Feltome—a person with whom he was known not to have lived on good terms—had been found dead on the floor of her room, which had been entered with violence, the window-fastenings being broken out, one morning; and a brass-bound box, which more than one of the servants had seen on more than one occasion in the hands of the deceased, was found in a room to which Barry alone had had access since the tragedy. On this circumstantial evidence he had been charged with the commission of the crime and arrested. These were the sole facts they could learn. Suppositions and surmises were freely offered—a hundred motives for the perpetration of the deed were suggested—but the only tangible thing that their inquiries brought forth was this stark-naked, hideous truth, that Miss Feltome was dead, and Barry O'Byrne in prison on a charge of having murdered her.

It was late when they arrived at O'Byrne Castle, and the silence of death was over the place. "Some people would go to bed if to-morrow were the judgment-day," Laura said, impatiently. "Papa, make the man row at the door till the seven sleepers would be roused; we must get in." And the man, urged

on by the clear, decisive tones of the prettiest of the two pretty, sorrowful girls whom he had driven from Cork, knocked with a fresh energy that at last brought one of the English footmen, frightened and sleep-stupified, to the door.

They found the wife of the suspected man in a little room upstairs, "where she could see all the corners at once," she said. She was huddled up on a sofa, attended by her own maid and Mary; the latter looking far more haggard and worn by the late events even than her mistress. When the two young girls, leaving their father down below, came tumultuously into her presence, bringing with them an inexpressible air of sociality and safety and freshness, Mrs. Barry O'Byrne proceeded at once to "give way," as her maid expressed it, in the most approved and orthodox manner. With one hand she pressed her handkerchief to her face, and the other she extended with a vague warmth to whichever elected to take it; and between her sobs she murmured something about being a broken-hearted, bereft, disgraced woman. And though Laura's gorge rose at the selfishness which could think first of its own fallen state, she still believed that her object in coming had been to offer such balm as could be offered to Mrs. O'Byrne.

As children fly shamefaced and scared from the sight of an accident, so do feeble-minded women of scanty affections turn away with a startled dread of its darkening them from the one who is under a heavy cloud. All Mrs. O'Byrne's vanity in her young husband—for it had never been love that flourished in so foully unnatural an atmosphere—had vanished, and in its place had sprung up a rancorous feeling of dislike and dread, of fear and shame, and revengeful loathing. And all these were concentrated with tremendous intensity for her on the once-idolized Barry O'Byrne.

Of the tragedy itself she could tell them little more than they had already heard. "He swears he was never in her room—poor dear, poor murdered dear—at all that night; but he must have been, because a little box she valued, for reasons he well knew, was found on him—no, not on him, but where he had been; and so he must have taken it, and killed her in doing it. And it's all too horrible for me to talk about, as you may think. I only wish I was safely back at Grey-stoke; but people tell me I mustn't go till after he's tried."

"You surely wouldn't—you couldn't wish to go away from him now, poor fellow?" Laura said. "You must know how innocent he is, and how crushing such a charge must be to him. I can understand your being shocked at the fate of your friend; but that grief must all be submerged in the far greater grief you must experience at what Barry is suffering."

"Then you're very much mistaken," Mrs. O'Byrne replied, in a more pettish tone than was seemly when the subject of discussion was so dark a tragedy. "I might just as well be away for the matter of that, for I can't bring myself to go and see him. But now you are come I shall not be so desolate, and I may bear to live on in this horrible place till I'm free to go back to my own quiet home that isn't polluted as this is."

"I think I'll go down to papa for a little while," Laura exclaimed, starting up. "We shall be going to bed soon, I suppose, and I'd like to have a little talk with papa first."

"I think I feel equal to seeing your papa now; I think I can control my feelings sufficiently to see him," Mrs. O'Byrne said, as Laura, escorted by Mary, bearing the candle, left the room.

And when they had sent her father off to the sorrowing wife, Laura met with plenty of heartfelt, genuine, acute sympathy from the poor little, sad-looking English girl.

"Oh! miss, there's been no murder here," she sobbed out. "There was a mark on her forehead, but it was never given by a blow from master or any one else."

"It was never given by Barry O'Byrne, of that I'm sure," Laura said; and then the thought of Barry's bright past and dark present came over her, and she sobbed responsively.

There was a feeling of half-loathing and half-awe that came over the minds of the two girls as they followed in the wake of Mary, their guide, along the corridor on their way to their bedroom, when she pointed out to them the room it happened in. A feeling of repulsion and dread, that made them glad they were going to occupy a room together, had caused them to glance with more than curiosity into every dark corner and deeply-shadowed doorway.

"If I had not heard all about it, I should know that something horrible had happened in this house, Horatia," Laura

said, when they had barred the door on their attendant, and were left to the solitude of the gaunt room that no fire could make cheerful. "And now (it's particularly inconsistent of me to say it, I know, but I may as well say it, since I think it) ain't we silly to have come?"

"I am not disposed to think so, Lolly."

"Well, I don't think she welcomed us warmly at all."

"Did you bear the journey so well solely supported by the thought of the welcome she would extend to you?"

"I'm not quite sure what made me bear the journey so well, Horatia. I'm not quite sure what brought me here. I'm only sure of one thing, and that is, that, come what will to me, I must try to give such poor solace as may be given to Barry O'Byrne. If I'm wrong, God forgive me, for I shall go on being so."

"Dear Lolly! no one will think you wrong; but don't get too badly hurt yourself in healing others' wounds."

The girl turned quickly round and placed her hands on her sister's shoulders.

"Horatia! what are you afraid of?" she asked, fixing her frank, blue eyes firmly on her sister's as she spoke. "I can heal his wounds no better than papa and you can; and the knowledge that that is the case will keep me from any idle, baneful dreams, even were I disposed to indulge in them otherwise. But I am not, dear—I am not, believe me. He's dear as a brother to me—dear as Gerald is; and I would peril all I have, to give him such poor consolation and comfort as I would give to Gerald, if he were suffering (as I am persuaded Barry is) from the consequences of a passion that will only end with his life for another woman. I can offer no justification for such enthusiasm in reason; you must, therefore, find one in feeling. I shan't get 'hurt' in the way you seem to fear, but I shall be hurt through all my life if I fail in showing all the deep, sisterly sorrow and sympathy I feel now for Barry O'Byrne."

"Poor little Lolly," Horatia thought, as she kissed her sister's pure, warm lips that night; "and she really thinks that it is all fraternal, and that Barry O'Byrne is no more to her than Gerald? It would be worse than useless to enlighten her; worse than cruel to add the sting of self-reproach and doubt of her own motives, to the other stings that are wounding her so grievously now."

There had been nothing said on the

subject of visiting Barry, but when they met at breakfast the following morning, Horatia's question of "What time shall we start, papa?" elicited no surprise; on the contrary, Mr. Bray's prompt reply proved that the subject, though not discussed, had been in everyone's thoughts. "We can see poor Barry from two till four," he said; "after that he will be engaged with his lawyer; so I should like to be there at two."

"Is she going with us?" Laura asked; and her father told her "No, Mrs. O'Byrne could not 'bring herself' to see him."

"When he comes out cleared, she'll be sorry for having shown such heartlessness," Horatia said.

"What will his life be, I wonder?" Laura said, dreamily. "When he does come out, things can't go on as they were before."

"Lolly," her father said, taking her in his arms, "don't go to see Barry with the feeling that he is merely suffering a terrible temporary infliction. Unless something at present undreamt of intervenes, an innocent man will suffer, not for the first time, on evidence that is only strong because nothing stronger to the contrary can be proved. Our poor friend is in a terrible strait."

"Don't I know it, dear?" she said, softly; "do you fear that it is some wild dream of the future, that can never be realized, that makes me burn to see and soothe him now? I am broad awake, papa, believe me."

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE FALLEN MAN.

He was not fallen in appearance. The shame they had foisted on his ancient name, and the sin they were striving to foist upon his soul, had not marred the fair exterior yet; some of the brilliancy was gone, but none of the beauty.

He sat there in his prison-room—that fine man, in his best bloom of health and strength and youth, feeling utterly friendless and utterly fallen; scorned of women and distrusted by men. He sat there, with that in his face that Vandyke gives the Stuarts—a proud melancholy, but with thrice the Stuart beauty. A clear, pale face, with eyes of that rare grey hue which is black in rage and blue in love, fringed by black lashes and shaded by blacker brows, and possessing

all the tender charms of a woman's in depths that are unfathomable. The dark curls with the ruddy tinge at their tips, and the thick moustache which lined out the form of his full, firm mouth, would have gladdened the soul of a painter. The beauty of a god and the grace of a courtier, and all deepened and intensified by the subtle refinement of an intellectual and highly cultivated mind. Possessing all this, he sat there feeling himself to be utterly friendless and forsaken; for the days had been many that he had spent in prison now, and no sign of sympathy from the only ones whose sympathy he craved had been made to the fallen man.

No message of pity and sorrow had come from Drumleyne, though one might have been sent scathlessly? Tim Sullivan had come lurking about like a faithful, broken-hearted hound on more than one occasion, and when admitted to his former master's presence, had betrayed such abject misery that the stern officials' hearts had been touched, and they had counselled Barry not to see him again if he didn't want to be unmanned. Tim had brought no message of pity and sorrow from Drumleyne, nor had the fair mistress of that place conveyed her feelings to poor Barry by other means. Was she, the fair star of his life, utterly unmoved by the knowledge of the fate that had come upon him? Had the love that was rekindled during that brief passage of arms, when he tore her from the brink of the bog, died out thus soon in callous indifference? "It could not be," he said, and yet she made no sign. His faith began to flag in that depressing atmosphere. He told himself that whatever had been her outward degradation, he would have burst every human bond to gain her side, and pity and console. He forgot that women cannot burst all human bonds, or even feeble social ones, innocuously.

"She'll know how I loved her, and what I've risked and endured for her, when it all comes out, as it must unfortunately," he thought; "and then probably she'll only despise me for the cowardice that dared not put it to the test even at the risk of ruining her, but at any rate she will know how I loved her."

And then he winced at the damping check that was given to his reflections by the thought that Laura Bray would know it too, and perhaps come to have a contempt for him at thus realizing her prophecy and wasting his life for an idea.

"Unless she has forgotten me," he said, bitterly, "as well as the one who has far more cause to think of me tenderly than Laura Bray ever had."

Then he fell to wondering how the news of this sad fate which had befallen him had been received at Theynham.

"Most likely they all say they knew me once slightly," he thought, "and if I'm hung, Laura will tell the story of Barry O'Byrne with all the vivacity I once thought so charming to any empty-headed ass who may be garrisoned there! Ah! women are so devilish deceitful!"

The defection of the woman he had married, little as he cared for her individually, served to strengthen his opinion as to the perfidy of the whole sex. Probably, had Mrs. O'Byrne come to his side and striven to console him, his soul would have beat more fiercely still against its prison-bars. But she did not come, and try to console him; therefore he felt injured.

He was sitting down with his back to the door, when the keys grated harshly, and his warder huskily announced some visitors. He was rising slowly and adjusting some slips of paper which he had prepared for his lawyer as he rose, when his arm was clasped by the small, soft, warm hand of a woman, and as in almost a delirium of astonishment he looked down on Laura Bray's cavalier-hat (he could not see her face, she had bent that down on his arm), there was a further rustling of female garments, and Horatia said—

"Barry, we came—we would—at once—at once—we thought you might like to see us and papa; dear Barry, we knew you so well!"

There was such hearty, unbounded, unquestioning belief in his innocence, that Barry could not thank them or welcome in words just yet. Nor were words needed; indeed, Mr. Bray was thankful that they were not forthcoming, for an attempt to speak would have broken down the embankment of calm by which alone he was enabled to dam up his feelings. And Laura wanted no words! There was a wealth of loving gratitude, of appreciation of her regard, in the way he clasped her to his heart and held her there. She could say nothing, she could only cling closely to the man who had fallen upon evil days. When fortune was fair with him he had never asked for more than her friendship, and it sometimes happens when this is the case, that when fortune frowns women are ready to

give all their love. The very perversity of passion leads them to give most when and where least can be gained in return.

They had come over all three of them in such a burst of enthusiasm that they had not had time to fall flat in any way. But now, when they had settled down a little after the first exuberant excitement of that meeting had passed off, Barry himself, gratefully happy as he was for the friendship shown in such an hour, was the one to remind them that there were other things in the world besides his feelings to be consulted.

"However it goes with me," he said, "you will take Mrs. O'Byrne back to England with you, wont you?"

Mr. Bray nodded assent; he could not speak clearly yet. A weak man, you will say, for his paternal fondness and his friendly emotion combined, to induce him to still allow that clinging clasp of Laura's.

Laura raised her head, and her eyes met Barry's.

"However it goes with you, we shall stay here till—"

"Till what, dear?" he asked. "You must only stay till my trial is over, Laura. Whatever may be decided upon then, you must not wait to see accomplished."

His voice was so tenderly sweet in speaking of his possible end, that all the girl's soul thrilled to it. He, her god, her idol, and hero, the man she told herself she loved like a brother, was telling her that she must not stay by his side when others deserted him, because there would be shame and sorrow in so staying, and she might suffer in the opinion of the world. All that his eyes and tones said, as he bent down and pressed his lips to her little clasping hands, and told her that she must not wait to see the decision of the trial accomplished. She forgot everything then!—forgot the wife she had been so urgent in desiring to seek and comfort—forgot the existence of the woman whose love had brought him to this pass—forgot that he was not in reality the brother to whom love might be proffered with impunity. She only remembered that Barry O'Byrne would have to suffer much, and that she might (at the cost of something doubtless, but that was to herself) alleviate some portion of that suffering.

"Dear Barry!" she said, fervently, "I'll never leave while you live—never, that is, till you're free and well and happy, as you will be, Barry! for God cannot

be so cruel as to let this hideous work be wrought."

"Then you don't doubt me, Laura? You don't think me the vile, cowardly miscreant I'm popularly supposed to be?"

And Laura, as he asked it, held her hands out to him in token of perfect faith and reliant friendship, as a man might have done.

"Doubt you!" she said. "I should doubt my own mother and my own heart first, and then I shouldn't do it. No, Barry, as little as the whole world will doubt you before long, for God will not forget to be just."

"If my clearance hinges on some 'special interposition,' I shall come off but badly in these keen practical days, Laura," he said, smiling sadly.

And then, the painful topic thus fairly set afloat, they discussed it—Barry sedulously refraining from saying anything save that he had never even been inside the dead woman's room.

"She was a hard, cruel woman, and she came to a hard, cruel end, so far as its being sudden and terrible goes; but I don't believe she was murdered," he said at last. "And now God rest her soul, for I don't want to say anything more about it."

They sat with him during the specified two hours, giving him all the comfort and sympathy they could, according to their several lights. Mr. Bray earnestly recommended in rapid succession a dozen English advocates, on the ground of each being the "best man of his day for anything of the sort." But Barry had already secured a counsel in the person of a keen-witted countryman, who had never experienced the slightest difficulty in proving even guilty men innocent. The two girls had no line of action for the future to recommend. They contented themselves with making the present as endurable as it might be made, with soothing him and striving to make him forget if possible. And, like the true women they were, they only succeeded in making him feel that they could not for one moment forget his coming danger, his impending disgrace.

With unconscious jealousy, Laura was eager to know whether she—the woman whom, she was convinced, in some way or another, was implicated in this affair—had been near him or not? She tingled with anger when she thought of this bright, young, wasted life, burnt

out on another woman's shrine. She ached with a feeling that she dared not analyse, when she reflected that that woman might unconsciously have brought him to this pass, and now be neglectful of him in his hour of need.

"Barry," she said, at last, "we are not the only ones who come to see you: you have other friends who will take up your time, so it will be well to fix an hour for our next visit. We will come to-morrow."

"I have no other friends now," Barry said, briefly; "most people fight shy of a fellow who's situated as I am, you know, Laura, unless the claims of kindred are on them; and I'm the last of my race."

Her cheek flushed scarlet as she bent her head down towards him, and whispered—

"I hoped that the one you have been so nobly faithful to had been faithful to you now, Barry; she surely comes?"

"No, Laura, she does not; don't blame her, you can't judge her fairly, and I'd rather not hear her blamed at all. Besides, it's just as well that she should stay away, for she could not be soft and gentle and loving to me, as you are."

"And all my 'loving gentleness' is as nothing to you, Barry, compared to what one moderately kind word from her would be? I know it, Barry; for the love I give you is a sister's quiet love, and it can't—how should it?—supply the aching void the withdrawal of that other love has left. But she might come to you now—it seems hard and unfeeling and unwomanly not to come to you now."

"Don't blame her," he reiterated.

"Oh, Barry! how can you, how can you even now be so tolerant, so infatuated? it is through her you are suffering, I know, I am sure—through her you are suffering, and breaking my heart."

"Not through her—for her perhaps, in a measure, darling! You told me once to forget her; well, I couldn't do it then, Laura, and I shall never do it now; but if I could have obeyed you and grown careless of her, that poor devil of a woman might have been alive now, and I shouldn't have been here."

She could not avoid giving a convulsive start—there was a savour about this speech that she did not like. He could not be guilty. But he spoke as one who was guilty might speak. Then she checked the trembling, and turned to him again as she thought, "And even

then I should love him still. I could never turn from him, whatever has been."

Poor Lolly! she was fulfilling her woman's destiny, and loving in the wrong place. What was there about this man that she should be so ready to steep her own soul in the waters of bitterness, and blight her own life through striving all ineffectually to brighten his? He was handsome and brave, and gentle and gallant, but not loving to her, and many men were all these things, and fully alive to her merits at the same time. Yet these she passed over, with at the best but a very careless regard, and without a hope in loving him, went on quietly doing it till, unconsciously, he had become the passion of her life. If he now could be proved to be stained with a thousand crimes she felt that she could not turn from him. There was a promise of this adherence in the lengthened indrawing of her breath as she placed her hand in his again, and said "good-bye" to him "till to-morrow." She seemed to be nerving herself to bear the worst; but he did not read her aright. It had been his curse all through life to mistake women and their mute eloquence. He thought she was tired because she had grown so suddenly and strangely quiet. He thought that she was beginning to realize that it would be a humiliating thing to have shown such fervent sympathy and affection for a man who might be proved guilty in law of so dark a crime. He mistook her, in fact, and did not guess that she was quietly steeling her soul to bear anything rather than be forced from him even in appearance, now come what might. He thought it was a sister's quiet love that she had given him in more halcyon days, and that now, when to give it would be to involve her in melancholy tedium, she would withdraw it in her own charming manner.

"You will come again then, to-morrow?" he asked; "it is too much to expect of you."

"Yes, we will come. Papa, shall we say the same time to-morrow?—or would any other hour suit you better, Barry?"

She still had an uneasy feeling that it was just possible the Countess of Kilcorran might remember the days of old, and come to see the lover of her youth in his hour of darkness. She had a more uneasy feeling that Barry might be aware of such an intention on her part, and desirous of avoiding a meeting between them, Kathleen, and herself.

"Any hour that you could come will suit me, Laura; what can I have to interpose between me and the one sunbeam left to me, do you think?"

"Doesn't Tim come to you?" Laura asked. She knew that Tim had entered the service of the Countess of Kilcorran, and she distrusted the poor Irish lad as a means of intercourse between that noble torment of her soul and her friend Barry.

"Tim has been—yes, poor fellow, he has been three or four times; but I persuaded him to go away out of the country before my trial—he'd have broken his heart while it was going on."

A flash like a rosy ray of light burst over Laura's face as he spoke, and her breath came short and quick with passionate excitement.

"You persuaded him to go out of the country?—oh! Barry, I'm happier than when I came in."

"What makes you happier?" he asked.

"A revelation has burst upon me!"

And then she would say no more, for her father and Horatia came up to them, and it was time to leave Barry O'Byrne.

"What did you think you had discovered, Lolly," her sister asked, anxiously, "when Barry said he had persuaded Tim Sullivan to go out of the country? You don't think—you can't think that Tim could be a witness against him in any way, do you?"

"Against him? oh! how stupid you are, dear; no, I don't think, and I don't know anything, save that I must go to Drumleyne to-morrow, and see if Tim's there still. I am not clear about anything, save that he shall not go away while his master's life is in danger, if I can help it. I will see that woman, too, and appeal to her."

"What woman? and what will you appeal about?"

"That Countess of Kilcorran. Can't you see, Horatia, that it all hinges on that story I told you the night we were crossing that he told me long ago. Miss Feltome knew something about the Countess of Kilcorran that Barry would have died rather than have made public; and don't you know that they all speak of a little box that was Miss Feltome's being found empty in Barry's room, and don't you see that he's anxious that Tim should get clear off. Tim a witness against him, indeed! no, but I believe that Tim killed her, and that Barry is screening him."

CHAPTER XIX.

THE COUNTESS OF KILCORRAN GROWS WARM, AND THE EARL—COLD.

WHEN the news of the dark cloud that had come up with such fearful intensity over O'Byrne Castle was brought to the Countess of Kilcorran, she was sitting alone. The servant who came to announce luncheon to her gave her the information, and the firm command she had over her countenance during the reception of it sent him off with his previous impression that his mistress was a very cold man confirmed.

"Is the earl at home?" was all she said, for she had seen nothing of the earl since the previous evening, when he had been so piteously lachrymose that she had pleaded a headache and retired early. She was told that the earl was in the library. And then she said, "Very well. Go and tell him I'm coming to see him, and shut the door."

When the door was closed this woman, who had been so unmoved before her servant, dropped on her knees, and almost grovelled, groaning, with her head down low—the beautiful, bright, proud head that Barry had so striven to avoid, bowing. Then she murmured a few broken words of supplication to the Lady of Heaven, that were fervent and meaningless, and utterly inadequate to express her sorrow and love and dread.

"If this cannot be averted, let me die—let me die. Mother of God! save him, and hear me. Oh, Barry! my love! my love!"

There was no acting, no straining after effect in her impassioned movements and wildly incoherent words. It was a genuine outburst of feeling long pent up that had now broken all bounds and defied all restraint. There was no acting and no straining after effect; and yet—how can women do it?—the next moment she was standing before the glass smoothing her hair, in order that she might show an unruffled front to her husband. The torrent of agonized passion that had swept over her soul, and carried away her composure, had left its marks on her face, brief as its passage had been. Those anguished tears which she had shed had left burning traces of themselves on her cheeks, and her brow looked contracted and lined. Never trust to appearances, though. Grief may have raged in the heart five minutes before it comes down and pours its wealth of mirth out to you, the un-

suspecting guest. And the face that now beams suave smiles, and that appears to be only flushed with pleasurable excitement, had to be toned down with Rimmel's toilette vinegar, and the powder puff, before it was discreet to come and welcome you.

She wiped her tears away and smoothed her hair and brow, and hastily swallowed some water. And then, with her face composed and calm, but very grave, as was seemly, she walked with her usual sweeping step down to see the earl.

"Can I speak to you for a moment?" she asked, walking up to him, and laying her hand on the arm of the chair on which he sat, with his face buried in his hands.

"Yes," he answered, in a thick voice.

"I have just heard horrible tidings, Lord Kilcorran. Did you know them before?"

"I have heard them."

"But did you know them before this morning—before I knew them?" she urged. "If you did, it was a cruel kindness to keep from me what so fatally concerns poor Barry O'Byrne."

"It would have done no good; it would only have hurt you," he muttered, in an apologetic tone; "besides, I was so unstrung myself, that I could not speak about it." Then he took his hands from his face, and looked up at her with a half-fearful fondness, as he said, "We can do no good here; I think we will go abroad."

"Go abroad! In God's name, why?" she cried.

"Because we can do no good, and it will be so painful to stay here and hear of it perpetually, and feel powerless to help him."

"Lord Kilcorran, he must not die; he never did this thing—something can surely be done; he never did this thing, and if you spend your whole substance in doing it, you must not leave a stone unturned in striving to avert his danger."

"Why do you say I must do this?" he ejaculated. "I'm sure I'm willing enough to do anything I could; but why you should think I ought—"

He stopped abruptly, looking nervous and miserable, and she gave vent to an exclamation of impatience that did not seem to soothe him much.

"Why? in common humanity, and because—"

and now she paused suddenly, for she was about to say "because you took me from him;" but she re-

flected that this consideration might not materially serve her cause. So she checked herself, and he misinterpreted the check and looked uneasy.

"Poor Tim!" she said, after a minute or two, during which the earl had been glancing furtively at her, and striving, as it seemed, to read her. "I must see him, and speak to him; and if you'll let me," she said, almost humbly, "send him with a note to poor Barry; he must not think that I fail him now."

He almost started from his chair, and then sank back, querulously muttering that he couldn't think of allowing anything like intercourse to exist. Then he added, that he had dismissed Tim in order that he might not act as medium between his former master and herself, should she be weakly disposed to indulge in any such morbid philanthropic sentimentality.

"Dismissed Tim!" she said, removing her hand from his chair, and reminding him once more of a tigress. "Excuse me when I say that I cannot accept his dismissal. I shall take him back again. You have the power and the right to forbid my corresponding with another man, and I must bow to your decision, though it makes my heart bleed to think that Barry O'Byrne should learn to look upon me as a false coward, who made no sign of faith in it when his honour was aspersed. I must bow to that; but I do not think that you will carry your authority so far as to interfere with my servants—that will surely be too petty an exercise of it, even for you, so I shall take Tim back."

"I believe he is gone away. I think you will have some difficulty in finding him; in fact, Kathleen, dearest! don't try."

"Gone away? What motive had you in banishing my poor groom, Lord Kilcorran? what has made you send him off like a thief in the night?"

"I had none."

"You had," she cried, passionately. "Do you think I am blind, or a fool? What made you do it just after the report of the murder of the woman—at sight of whom you blanched—reached you? Confidence for confidence, Lord Kilcorran. I will tell you that I loved and was engaged to Barry O'Byrne once. Now, what was that woman to you?"

"My God! what a woman you are! Have you kept these suspicions—this doubt, to yourself all along? I couldn't have believed it."

"I cared so little," she returned, scorn-

fully. "What did it matter to me then? But now the case is different; she is dead, and Barry suspected; and you knew her, and you shall tell me (and the whole world, if it's necessary to clear him) how and when and where."

"You are violent—unlike what I supposed it possible you could be. Pray calm yourself; pray believe that if I knew aught that might serve this young man, I would use such knowledge in his behalf. You are unjust in your impatience, Kathleen. You need not tell me that you loved him once; I feel it painfully."

And the earl set to whimpering and shaking his head over his melancholy inability to inspire affection, and Barry's envied aptitude for doing so.

She stood looking at him, with a world of scorn gathering in her eyes. At last she spoke.

"It's generally believed, isn't it, that good courage comes with good blood? By that rule you ought to have more than I have, Lord Kilcorran."

"It seems to me it isn't a question of courage, but one of feeling, in this case," he replied, still whimpering—still avoiding the scornful eyes of his young wife.

"Yet I, the plebeian, have it all now," she went on, without noticing his remark. "I would face this dark mystery, whatever it is; you dare not!"

"There is no dark mystery. Kathleen, I wonder at your being willing to annoy me so causelessly; you have lighted on a mare's nest, and you're ingeniously putting things that haven't the slightest connexion together in order to worry and distress me."

"Answer me, Lord Kilcorran. No, don't take my hand and kiss it, like a puling boy, but answer me like a man—like the gentleman you ought to be, if blood tells at all. Had not the death of that woman something to do with your interests?"

"No; what should she, living or dying, have to do with me?" he answered, petulantly. "Pray end this scene, Kathleen; your regard for Barry O'Byrne is rendering you ridiculous."

"Have you not seen and conversed long and privately with Tim since that tragedy?" she went on, impatiently; "don't say no—don't lie when you needn't. I saw him go to your room, and come from it; and I called him, and he dared not obey my call. Now what did that mean, Lord Kilcorran?"

"Nothing," he replied, in a low voice. "I dismissed him, after a short conversation, and I told him it was useless to engage your intercession, for go he must; and gone he is, and I think we've given quite time enough to the discussion of the departure of a stable-boy."

"Quite time enough; we'll discuss other things now. Will you help and aid in clearing Barry O'Byrne?"

She asked it with a sudden inflection of voice, that few women who have not Irish blood in their veins can compass—with a strange thrilling sweetness and tender softness that they alone can call up at any moment to serve their own ends.

"How can I aid him?" the earl asked, snappishly.

"It seems to me," she said, slowly, and with a distinctness of intonation that jarred painfully on the palpably shaken nerves of her husband, "that if everything that was known about the woman was stated honestly and faithfully, that it might serve Barry O'Byrne."

"I have no doubt that all that is known will be stated about her."

"Do you mean to come forward with what you know?"

"What I know is totally irrelevant—I mean I know nothing. Really, Kathleen, I wish you wouldn't badger and cross-examine me in this way; it's not becoming, and it's not pleasant; and, once for all, I won't stand it."

"You are strangely moved," she said, quietly; "strangely averse to my dwelling on the topic of my old friend's misery, and strangely averse to my making any suggestions as to a possible alleviation of it. String up your courage, Lord Kilcorran, and tell me, if you can, that you have nothing in your possession that would tend to exonerate Barry O'Byrne."

"You are mad!" he said, angrily, "to put such a question to me; grief for your friend—pah! I hate the paltering phrase!—for your lover!—has warped your judgment; be advised by me—go to your room and calm yourself back to sense and duty; you have strangely forgotten the latter since you have been here to-day."

She went up and put her hands on his shoulders, and bent down, forcing him to look into her eyes.

"Once more," she said, softly, "I'll ask it once more—Why was my groom sent away and forbidden to speak to me before he went? And tell me, on your

honour, whether you have not something in your possession—some fact—some saving straw—some paper that might help (if boldly, manfully brought forward) Barry O'Byrne."

"I have not," he answered, with a proud dignity that became the white-handed old patrician well.

"God forgive you!" she exclaimed, passionately, drawing herself away from him with a gesture of loathing contemptuous aversion that stung him to the quick. "God be more merciful to you than I would be if I find that you could save a hair of his head from injury and you don't do it."

"Why should you think I could? It's insanity on your part to harbour such an hallucination against all reason and proof to the contrary; why should you think I could?"

"Because you evidently knew and trembled before that woman; because her death has shocked you; and because you won't allow me, a keen friend to Barry, to see the one who'd give his life to save the life of the man who's accused of murdering her."

"You're not a very close reasoner, Kathleen," he said, with an attempted scorn in his voice that fell miserably far short of its intended effect on her. She clenched her teeth together in a sudden fury, and her eyes flashed out at him in a wrath that made him shrink from meeting them. Then she turned and left the room suddenly, and Lord Kilcorran rang the bell. When it was answered, he told the footman to take care and have all the servants and all the boys about the place informed that no letter or message of any kind must be transmitted from Drumleyne to either O'Byrne Castle or the imprisoned master of that place. So a short, warm note of hope and trust and sympathy that Lady Kilcorran wrote and thought was conveyed to poor Barry by a trusty messenger, found its way instead into the pocket of the earl. She waited eagerly for an answer, and none came; and then she wrote again, and this time traced it to its destination, and tore it from her husband's hands before he could read it.

"So," she said, with the wearied air of one who was sadly overtired of many things, "it has come to this, has it, that you intercept my letters? Oh, how little it all is—and low, and mean! What could you fear that I should say to poor Barry? You fear nothing that I could

say—you only say that. You do fear something. Why won't you tell me what?"

There was a tone of triumph now mingled with her contempt. She stood smiling down upon him with such unconcealed scorn, tearing her letter into minute fractions and scattering those fractions on the floor, that the uneasy look came into his face more strongly than before. His furtive glances betrayed even more anxiety than they had on that morning—that morning when the countess had the tidings first.

"In your attempt to resuscitate a dead and buried romance you are making yourself ridiculous, Lady Kilcorran. What is this Barry O'Byrne to me that I am to be charged in highflown phrases to tilt at windmills on his behalf?"

"He is nothing to you; but he's a great deal to me—the truest friend I ever had or can have. It's that poor woman who is dead who was known to you!"

The earl's face became suffused with the purple of futile rage.

"Miss Feltome was simply to me a helpless lady whose acquaintance was forced upon me by your friend, Mr. O'Byrne. I regret her fate if she was murdered, and hope her murderer will be brought to justice. But I really take no warm interest in the matter. Your brain must be weakened as well as excited, or you would not conjure up such unhealthy ideas, they are unworthy of you and insulting to me."

"Miss Feltome nothing to you save a casual acquaintance. Oh! Lord Kilcorran tell that to a woman whose credulity has been kept intact by the guardianship of those whom it was ill work trying to impose upon. I early learnt to read men's faces by the clear light of the knowledge I had, that my portion in life would be to be deceived if I did not deceive. I suspected the moment I saw you tremble at Miss Feltome's voice that she was more to you than the commonplace, unimportant spinster she seemed, and my suspicions are confirmed."

"How?" he asked eagerly.

"Perhaps, I'll tell you some day," she replied carelessly, "or maybe I'll reserve it altogether. If Barry O'Byrne get's clear off I'll let the subject rest; if he does not, I must aid him since you will not, and I'll aid him by stirring your memories."

"Can Tim have betrayed? No, he didn't

know, he couldn't read those cursed papers," the earl muttered to himself, as the young wife, he was beginning to feel himself utterly unable to cope with, left the room. "No, it's only the nature of her sex to suspect and be jealous. I wonder if she is jealous, or if it's only to annoy me that she presses me so sorely on this point?"

He fell to turning over the papers he had bestowed the malediction upon carelessly, and the subject of her jealousy or non-jealousy earnestly in his mind. But suddenly he banished the important question.

He locked the papers away in a writing table-drawer, then lay back in his chair and looked at that repository of his secrets for some minutes with complacency. Soon the complacent expression vanished, and a nervous, startled look came over it. "They're better burnt," he said hurriedly, unhooking the drawer and taking them out; "far better burnt; suppose they should ever be found, the follies of my youth dragged forward, far better burnt—far better burnt."

He threw them all into the fire, and watched with bated breath almost till the flames had devoured them, and the draught had carried their ashes away up the chimney. Then he lay back in his chair, and the complacent expression stole over his features again. An hour after, when a servant came in to see to the fire, the Earl of Kilcorran was dead.

CHAPTER XX.

A WORK OF SUPEREROGATION ON THE PART OF MISS LAURA.

WHEN Laura Bray, the morning after their first visit to Barry in the Cork jail, said that she was going to Drumleyne, Mrs. O'Byrne received the statement with that air of mild pitying forbearance one is apt to bestow upon the assertion of maniacal intentions. But when Laura proceeded to ask if she couldn't have a horse and ride over faster than she could be driven? if there wasn't a near cut across the hills? and further, "who was to go with her to show her the way?" Mrs. O'Byrne left off being pityingly forbearing, and waxed unmistakably wroth.

"Go there! go to Drumleyne!" she said. "Why, they've never sent to inquire for me since it happened, and it's all through that horrid woman that it happened at all."

"So I suspected," Laura replied, "that's the very reason I want to go over there."

"Well, Laura! I don't think it's very becoming of you to interfere, and in such a way too. Why should you want to see that Lady Kilcorran? and what good will your seeing her do? she knows nothing of the circumstances, and you know nothing of them either only what I've told you, and I haven't told you all. If anyone went to see her hoping to do good it should be me."

"Then why don't you go?" Laura asked, coolly. "I may think it should be you also—but all the same if you don't go I will. If I don't do any good I won't do any harm, I promise you that; but I want to see Tim, and I want to see the countess, so whether it's becoming or the reverse, I'll go to Drumleyne this morning."

"I think Laura has a faint hope that Tim knows something that may assist in clearing Barry," Horatia explained to Mrs. O'Byrne, who, what with her definite jealousy of Kathleen and her indefinite jealousy of Laura, was in a perturbed state of mind.

"I don't think she should entertain hopes of any kind in relation to Barry—that's my province, not hers," Mrs. O'Byrne retorted, indignantly. "And to go now publicly, in the open light of day, and hold communication with a bad, bad woman, who ran away with Barry—or tried to, only she got in one of their precious bogs—is not what Laura ought to do if she considers herself a friend of mine—it's an insult to me."

Laura was too genuinely in earnest in her hopes and fears about Barry to be wrought upon to the point of swerving from her intention by any peevishness on the part of Barry's wife.

"Look here," she said, good-temperedly going up to her and taking her hand kindly and warmly in a way that ought to have disabused Mrs. O'Byrne's mind of some unpleasant ideas which had been vaguely floating about in it.—"I do consider myself your friend, and I'm quite ready to hate the Countess of Kilcorran, but I don't believe, and you don't believe it either, that she was going to run away with Barry. As to her not sending here to ask after your health, don't care for it, she's a cold-hearted woman" (Laura warmed with her words), "she has never cared to inquire for poor Barry, for I asked him yesterday."

"How came you to know anything about her?" Mrs. O'Byrne asked, suspiciously, and the suspicion being palpable flushed Laura's cheek. There are some things too æsthetic to stand the test of explanation. Laura's friendship for Barry was one of these things. It was very pure, very ethereal, it would ill bear rough handling, least of all would it bear being called in question and doubted for what it seemed by his wife. So now, when Mrs. O'Byrne asked, with matured feminine asperity, how Laura came to know anything about the secret dearest to Barry's heart, Laura's cheek flushed with the consciousness that, harmless as the explanation would prove the means by which she had gained that knowledge to be, the explanation could not be given.

"He told me something about her once—some trifle, but it made an impression upon me, as trifles will, you know, Mrs. O'Byrne; and since then I have put two and two together, as you were doing just now, but I hope with more truthful results; and the end of it is, that I've come to the conclusion that I'd like to see her."

"Much good may the sight of her do you, that's all, Laura. I say nothing, however—please yourself—go, by all means; at any rate it will show her that her 'dear Barry' forgot her sufficiently to go philandering with other people, and she won't like that—so go."

"I mean to go—but what other people did he 'philander' with, as you term it?"

"Well, all Theynham talked of the way you flirted with him at one time, Laura; now you know they did," Mrs. O'Byrne said, deprecatingly, for the company of the Brays was very pleasant to her in her desolation, and she had no desire to offend the moving-spring. Still she could not resist trying to make Laura feel that she knew her weakness and pitied and forgave; therefore she reminded her of the flirtation, but did it deprecatingly.

"All Theynham was very good, and you have a magnificent memory, Lottie. I had forgotten the circumstance, but you, by recalling it, have comforted me overmuch. If ever I did flirt, as you term it, with Barry, the onus is on me to serve him now according to my lights, and they guide me to Drumleyne."

She went out into the stable-yard to find a groom and hear what horse she could have, and her sister following found her seriously considering the advisability

of the mount the groom had proposed—viz., Barry's big hunter.

"Laura, you can't, dear, you can't ride, you've no habit! besides, I doubt whether Mrs. O'Byrne has a side-saddle or not."

There was one, much the worse for wear, that "Miss Kate" used to ride on when she was staying at O'Byrne Castle, long ago, the man told them. And Laura said that would do, and the big hunter should be the horse to carry her. "You must go with me," she said to the man, "on something that will keep up, for I mean to go fast. And now, Horatia, come in and help me to improvise a habit."

"A big shawl, and a few pins, and my little, short, rough jacket—not a very exquisite equestrian toilette, but one that will do very well," Laura said, in reply to her sister's question of what on earth she would wear. "What does it matter, Horatia? I've the satisfaction of knowing that I have a nice habit at home, and the greater one of having carried my point. I'll confess, now that I am nearly off, that I have been tingling with fear all the morning of papa suddenly declaring I shouldn't go, and pronouncing it a Quixotic scheme."

Laura arrayed herself for the ride in the way she had explained she should to her sister. The rough jacket was warm and comfortable enough, but the shawl was a hideous and cold substitute for a habit. "I shall not present myself to her ladyship under the happiest auspices," she thought, as she rode along. "She'll probably take me for one of Mrs. O'Byrne's followers and hangers-on, for this a bad style of get-up undoubtedly."

The assertion that some people "look well in anything" is a futile thing. Nature's dress may be loveliness, and Norah Creina might have worn it with good effect, but the fact is doubtful to my mind. Our external appearance has an immediate influence upon our minds and feelings, and these react upon our external appearance in such a subtle way that it is all up with our looking well the moment we are dissatisfied and think we are not doing so. Abject deceptions are practised upon small beings of the gentler sex, in their childhood—they are told, when it is not convenient to dress them prettily, that fine clothes are all vanity and vexation of spirit, and that it is no matter how they look if they are only good. They never believe their instructors in this superiority of ugliness theory—

never by any chance! But they affect to do so generally, because at the time garments that are not beautiful may meet their views with respect to the disposition of their time. They may be contemplating the formation of those delectable things yeleft mud-pies, or a delicious hour on the border of a duck-pond, or a pleasant period at a straw-stack, in company with a brace of brothers and terriers, known far and wide for their skill in tossing any given number of rats over their heads in a minute. Under all or any of these circumstances, the attire dear to the indoor heart of young ladyhood would be a source of more woe than joy. But when she comes into the region of mirrors, don't expect your youthful daughter to believe you when you tell her that it is no matter how she "looks if only she is good." She may not tell you, but she will feel that if she looks a Guy to herself, there is little more in life, and goodness is not worth striving after.

Laura knew that it was all very well, and that she was at no great disadvantage while she remained in the saddle. The big hunter bounded under her in a way he had never bounded under mortal man (woman had never mounted him) before, for he liked her light hand and light weight, and showed his appreciation of these things by a sprightly grace of motion you would not have expected from so big a horse. Sitting well back in her saddle, Laura knew, though there was no line of beauty about the fall of the heavy tweed shawl, that she was at no disadvantage. He was a magnificent horse, spirited, and difficult to manage, and Laura was quite equal to the situation, which fact alone would ensure her looking well. With her hands rather low, giving and taking a pull with every step he set nearly, and her head up but still bent ever so little, she was the type of "a female equestrian of the period," and would have been far more creditable to the riding powers of the nineteenth century than the majority of those who sit upon the backs of caprioling steeds in that great field of mediocre equestrian display—the Row.

But she knew that the moment she dismounted she would look "dowdy," that is how she expressed it herself. It takes a graceful woman to look other than like a swan out of water when walking the earth in the best made of habits. If it is grasped fervently at both sides the spectacle is lamentable, and how very few

can succeed in holding it up with the one hand in a debonair way, and at the same time avoid tripping over it. Laura knew that all these difficulties would be multiplied tenfold in the case of the clinging tweed shawl. And as she was only a woman, when she neared Drumleyne this minor discomfort, that she was going to look "not her best" before a somebody who might, under other circumstances of course, have been her rival, was added to her deeper sorrows and anxieties.

She was only a woman! and the entrance to Drumleyne was very imposing. You went into the grounds straight out of the wild lovely road between battle-mented gates, from the top of which griffins leered at you, and up an avenue where the Irish oak and the arbutus made winter seem as freshly, brightly green a time as spring. She was only a woman, and there was an air of grandeur about the place that appealed to her woman's heart, and gave her a greater distaste than she had experienced before to the tweed shawl and the whole of the rough riding equipments. Possessions and cattle (taking "cattle" to mean nice carriage-horses and faultless hacks—I don't suppose any woman in her heart ever cared for cows and sheep and pigs), and men-servants and maid-servants, all of the best, and all in plenty, she felt that it was a good thing as the world goes to be mistress of, and acknowledged to herself that she should enjoy. I don't think she struck out the clause about the "stranger;" the power of entertaining him whenever he was "nice" and "good style" she was far from despising. And all this the Countess of Kilcorran—the woman whose sway had been such over Barry that he had shown himself blind to her love and charm—the woman who was now going to see her at a terrible disadvantage—all this the Countess of Kilcorran had.

The first sight of Drumleyne itself brought her to a nearer understanding of the motives which had made Miss Daly forswear her faith to Barry than she could have wished. "It would have been a hard thing to refuse; oh, good gracious, but I could never have been so mercenary," she thought, as she neared the front entrance, and felt dwarfed even on the tall hunter's back by the magnitude of the vast iron-bound door, and crushed by the atmosphere of feudal splendour that hung over the whole place. And then she relapsed into gloomy puerilities, and wondered how she should contrive to

walk with anything like dignity or grace along one of the vast lungs of such a house and into her ladyship's presence. She felt that in her clinging shawl and rough jacket she was such a very slight, very insignificant figure.

And all this possible mortification was bravely (in spite of occasional quahns) anticipated and risked for the sake of a man whom there were ten thousand chances to one against its ever serving. Women do these things constantly, and never expect praise, and only humbly hope they may avoid blame—and do not avoid it, of course, and do no good as a rule—and give undeserved service, and get undeserved censure, like the weak, strong, loving, generous fools they are.

And so it will be to the end of the chapter, and, doubtless, that it should be is good. They are early broken-in to the masculine regime. Does not the baby brother ruthlessly tear the gilded toy from the little sister for whom it was bought, and lick the gilding off, and then with infantile munificence return it to her when it isn't pretty any longer, and when he doesn't require it further to minister to his royal wants? And doesn't she take it with affected gratitude, like the abject slave she is, and ever will be to some masculine tyrant or other? And does she not go on sacrificing to him till she is grown up, and some other tyrant steps in, and more authoritatively commands that votive offerings be henceforth laid on his shrine alone? And is she not pleased to do it, and delighted when he accepts them, and slavishly and inconsequently happy at being trampled upon? The labour she delights in physics pain with a vengeance.

It is a painful thing when we've made up our minds to take a nasty leap that may and most probably will end in no temporary downfall and disgrace, to find that there is no occasion at all to attempt it, as a gate through which the whole field is going is open and more in the direct way than the leap. But we had made up our mind to take that leap, and it's painful to give it, and the degradation it might bring up. We don't like again to prepare our sheet and boil our peas towards a great penance. To feel that there's a certain interest attaching to us through our chivalrous taking up of the same is pleasant; and it's humiliating to have our preparation come to nought, and the interest fade away by reason of there

being no call for the performance of the penance. Whenever we make preparations towards an end—in fact, whether that end be pleasant or the reverse, we like it to come on—we have elaborate defences, and we don't like them to be null and void.

Laura had first quailed in her soul, and then she had armed it for the encounter with Barry's old love, Kathleen, Countess of Kilcorran. She hardly knew what she was going to ask, and yet she had much to ask of this woman. Principally she depended on her in influencing Tim, and of Tim's guilt in the matter of that death at O'Byrne Castle she had no manner of doubt. "How on earth I shall begin, I'm sure I don't know; but I suppose words will come when I want them," she said to herself, as she took her leg out of the pommel, and prepared to slip off her horse. But before she could do so, the expression in the face of the man who opened the door arrested her.

"Is the Countess of Kilcorran at home?" she asked, and the porter answered—

"Her ladyship wont see anybody."
"Wont see anybody! Why——" but she was interrupted by the man coming out quietly, and saying—

"You can't have heard it yet, Miss. My master, the earl, was found dead in his chair about an hour since. Her ladyship will not see any one."

A sickening sensation overspread her heart and soul as he spoke. A hundred fears of divers sorts darted through her brain at once, and aided in the prostration of spirit the downfall of her hopes of immediately serving Barry occasioned. She rallied after a minute or two, and expressed such conventional sorrow as instinct taught her to express. She felt a great deal more at first hearing of Kathleen as a widow.

"Can I see Tim Sullivan, the countess's groom?" she asked, and she was answered that Tim had been away for several days.

CHAPTER XXI.

LAURA IS WISE!

THERE was nothing for it but to put the big hunter back on the road to O'Byrne Castle, and endeavour to deaden in the pace the fears and anxieties the two pieces of intelligence she had just re-

ceived had caused her. Kate a widow! and Tim Sullivan gone! There was danger to Barry in this latter fact—danger tangible and real, she felt sure of that; and in the former, should this danger be happily averted, there was risk of another sort.

Suddenly she checked her horse.

"I cannot go back with my mind still unsettled as to what I'll do," she thought. "I'm baffled in the only thing my poor instinct told me might serve Barry, and I'm not quite sure that Horatia isn't right in fearing that in trying to heal I may get wounded myself; these romantic friendships always end—and always end badly for the woman. She will be free to offer more of hers now, and mine will be consequently more valueless than ever. If papa likes I'll go back to England."

Jealousy does sometimes cause a woman to resolve upon pursuing a wise course.

They went on her return, according to their promise, to visit Barry, and Barry was, as Laura had anticipated, unpleasantly agitated on receipt of the tidings from Drumleyne. He said it was very sad and shocking; but he did not look as if he thought it either, and Laura attributed all the brightness which would, evidently against his desire, overspread his face to reprehensible satisfaction at Kate being a widow.

Fraught with this conviction, she was strengthened in her determination of going away while still only wounded, not mortally hurt.

"Barry," she said, "after, all I think it will be better that we should return to England; we can do you no good; assistance clearly cannot come from us, and our presence may only prevent your other friends exerting themselves."

This was aimed at the countess, and Barry felt that it was so.

"Then you'll desert me, Laura?" he said, with a hypocritical assumption of sorrow he was far from feeling. He began to understand fully all the injury Laura's romantic friendship might do her, and he liked Laura Bray too well to care to have the marring of her fortunes on his conscience. So he pretended to be sorry that she thought of leaving him, and was in reality glad. Besides, he did feel that a brighter sun rose for him when the Earl of Kilcorran's lamp went out. The truth had dawned upon him that it would be useless to be reticent on the subject of those facts which had given Miss Feltome the sway which she

had exercised over him. He could no longer avert the cloud that was lowering—that had long lowered over Kathleen's head. It (whatever it was) must all come out at his trial. And for the sake of such honour as the hard world leaves to poor ill-used women in such cases, it would be well for Kathleen that the earl was dead. He could swear to the existence of some papers, that would be found amongst the earl's effects, and his knowledge of them, and power of testifying to them, would prove much that it was essential should be proved before his innocence could be established. He did not express verbal pleasure at hearing that Tim was gone; but he was relieved, and Laura read his relief, and resented the cause of it immediately.

"Tim's a skulking, cowardly hound!" she said, passionately. "Oh, Barry, I feel sure you're bearing all this discomfort and disgrace and possible danger for the sake of a man whom you know to be guilty. How can you do it?"

"It will all come right in the end, Laura; it must now. Don't be severe on poor Tim; you'll think better of him by-and-bye."

But Laura declined to entertain for an instant the notion of its being even possible that she could think better of a man who went off and left his foster-brother in the lurch.

It was better to go. She had put it to Horatia "calmly and candidly," so she said, and calmly and candidly Horatia had replied—

"Well, dear Lolly, I think so too. You can do no good to any one, you know, and on the whole—yes, let us go back to Theynham. Vyvyan isn't Barry, but Vyvyan's very fond of you!"

"Vyvyan has nothing whatever to do with my determination to go back," Laura said, severely; but Horatia's assent seemed to render it inevitable, and Barry when informed had not dissuaded them, as has been seen.

It was a miserable parting, for they both felt that however it went with Barry, they were saying good-bye to each other for ever; for a revelation had come to each, and they knew that it would be well for her not to see him again until they were very different to the Barry and Laura they were then.

It was a miserable parting, but it was got over at last, and Laura left Barry to his memories, and went off on the hard pilgrimage life would be to her henceforth.

"It couldn't have lasted—it couldn't have gone on as it was, Lolly," her sister said to her, sympathetically—"it could only exist while you were blind, and you are blind no longer."

"I shall get over it, Horatia; don't pity me, and don't be sententious, and pray never remark that you were 'always afraid of something of the sort.' I shall get over it; and years hence, if it all goes well with Barry, as pray God it will, I shall meet him again, a fat middle-aged man, perhaps, with a bald head, and shall not then smart under the consciousness that I've made an idiot of myself about him when he never wanted me to do so." And having said this, Laura wrapped herself more closely in her mantle and declined further discussion on the subject.

As soon as Mrs. O'Byrne found that they were resolved to go away and leave her, her grief at the prospect rose mountains high. Their presence in her house had been a deliciously piquant grievance, which she could dish up at any moment and indulge her maid with a taste of. "It betrayed such vulgar curiosity and total want of consideration on the Brays' part," she said, "coming and taking the house by storm at such a time. Not but what she was very happy to see them if it gave that girl, who is silly enough to be in love (think of that, Jenkins) with your master, any pleasure or comfort. And she herself, thank God, had never been a jealous woman, and had too much respect for herself now to be jealous of a man who was going to be proved a murderer; therefore, they were welcome to stay." All this she had said at not unfrequent intervals to her attendants, and they had said, "Oh, sure it was shocking, some people's audaciousness! And, for a young lady who called herself a young lady, Miss Laura, it was always noticed, had been rather free with master." Like the sycophants dependants too often are.

But now that they were really going away to leave her alone with only servants in the house that had all along had a banshee, and lately a sudden death, that might be proved a murder, in it, Mrs. O'Byrne was seriously discomposed. She abjured her undefined jealousy of Laura on the spot, and appealed vehemently to Laura's hitherto honestly exhibited liking for Barry, to remain and hear the result of his trial, and comfort him during its continuance. "Poor fellow! I'm sure I never counted on your deserting him, Laura, nor could he either, I'm sure."

"I haven't deserted him, Lottie; we've done all we can, and that amounts to nothing; but that's our misfortune, not our fault; we've been to him, and that's more than you have. If there's any 'desertion' in the case, you're the one who are guilty of it."

"And I'm far from well myself," Mrs. O'Byrne whined; and Laura, looking at her, had another pang shoot through her heart. Something had unquestionably altered the poor woman, and she looked "far from well." Her once fat, red face was haggard and yellow, and the habitual use of stimulants had told upon her, as such things will tell. Laura saw all this, and a pang shot through her heart; for Barry bound to this unloved woman was better than Barry free to seek the idolized widowed countess.

"Horatia can stay with you if she likes," Laura said; "but I can't, and it's no use to ask me." So it was arranged, not perhaps with the heartiest concurrence on Horatia's part, that she was to remain and condole, and console, and nurse, if necessary, Mrs. O'Byrne, and that Laura should return forthwith to Theynham with her father.

"Write me bare facts and no comments thereon, please, Horatia," Laura said to her as they sat talking that night. "Don't be tender, and don't be pathetic, but just write what you hear is done or is going to be done. And directly he is out come away home, and let us have done for years at any rate, if not for ever, with these O'Byrnes."

"Laura, you have changed too suddenly—or rather you think now, because you're sore at something, that you can change suddenly and thoroughly; but don't point the difference too clearly, dear, for the benefit of observant friends."

"Yes, I'm awake now," was all Laura's reply; "broad awake, dear, and not likely to be lulled off by baneful narcotics again."

It was a melancholy journey back to Theynham. The sickness and physical discomforts endured in crossing were rather hailed as reliefs by the girl who was so sick and discomfited at heart. Nausea and headaches are subversive of sentiment and romantic regret; but no sooner were they over, and the prosaically comfortable first-class railway carriage gained, than Laura realized that there were some things harder to bear than her philosophy had heretofore dreamed of. There was only one reflection that

brought her the mildest alleviation to her woe. "At all events," she said to herself, "I didn't stay there and nourish it after I discovered that it wasn't a sister's love took me there." And then in turn this consolatory reflection was counterbalanced by another—"Perhaps I should not have come away so soon if I could have stood the thought of that Countess of Kileorran; but I couldn't—I hate her."

In the meantime the hated woman was conducting herself with a propriety that commanded respect, and an absence of all kinds of affectation of woe that elicited astonishment. No sooner was she informed of the death than she proceeded to the room where the corpse was, and though an involuntary shrinking and trembling came over her at the mere presence of death, she was quite calm and collected, and forced the servants to be so also. In their presence she sealed up everything that could by any chance contain papers, letters, money, or valuables of any kind. "Things must remain precisely as they are till the earl's lawyers arrive," she said; "and they must be sent for at once. Mr. Rourke can be here this afternoon" (Mr. Rourke was the earl's Irish solicitor, and lived in Cork), "and then he will manage matters; until his arrival, the corpse shall neither be removed nor left."

She adhered to her resolution of not having the corpse removed, even when the doctor came and advised it. "No," she said; "he was here alone with papers of immense value, not only to him but to others. Those papers must be forthcoming, for they are here; but so terribly do I dread there being any delay or confusion about finding them, that I have done an unusual thing, I believe, in securing them myself before Mr. Rourke comes. Till he comes, I wish you to remain here, doctor—not by yourself, I shall stay in the room; but if you cannot oblige me, two of my servants shall stay with me."

"It is an unnecessary trial to your feelings, my dear lady. I will remain. You be advised by me; go and await Rourke's arrival in some less harrowing scene."

But she shook her head and thanked him, and sat down unmoved by his representations, with her beautiful pale face averted from the dead man on whom she could not look softly and kindly. And there she waited as she had said she

would, unweariedly; and there, sorely against his will, the doctor waited with her—for she was a lady who, though unpleasantly capricious, was doubtless heavily jointured.

Subduing the loathing her soul could but feel, utterly conquering the feminine cowardice which leads a woman usually to shun the dead whom she does not love, the countess sat there and waited while the hours passed by that unavoidably elapsed before Mr. Rourke could come from Cork and join her. And when Mr. Rourke did join her the countess learnt, to her mortification, that all her precautions had been unnecessary.

"It was quite an uncalled for thing on the part of your ladyship remaining in the room with the corpse; however, you did it all for the best, and no one will suspect you of intermeddling with his papers; but I have no doubt that everything will be found that is needful; the earl had few secrets."

When he said this the countess did that which not the sudden death or the repulsive confinement had been able to make her do—she changed colour with a startling suddenness that attracted the attention of the lawyer. "Your ladyship is not well—you have tried yourself too much," he said; "let me advise you to go away to your own room and be quiet for a time."

She looked keenly at him for a minute or two, and then she spoke, with an air of enforced calm—

"I can't leave this room till you have ascertained the existence and safety of certain papers, that I'll describe to you, and that I know he kept in that desk," and she pointed, as she spoke, to a plain, brass-hinged writing-desk which stood on the table close to the corner nearest to the earl's chair.

"You wish me to break your seal and search for them?" he said. "There is no occasion for it, believe me; these papers are —"

"Worth the world to me," she cried, passionately. "Yes, yes; break my seal—stop a moment, though, I have some thing to tell you first."

And then the Countess of Kilcorran unfolded a little story which shall not be told here.

The search she desired—or ordered rather—was made, and the papers she so earnestly implored them to find were missing. She would not listen to the comfort they offered her—that keen lawyer and kind old doctor—of the pro-

bability of the earl having placed them elsewhere.

"No, no," she said sorrowfully; "I, standing at the door this morning—this very morning before he was aware of my presence—saw him place these papers I have told you of away in this desk; if he removed them afterwards he removed them to destroy them; and if he destroyed them I shall have wrought evil to no end—no 'good,' but bitter deadly harm will be what I shall have secured to him; and I meant, oh! I meant only to serve him and make his life pleasanter."

She was all the woman now; helpless and defeated and utterly broken down, she went away to hide her misery and futile sorrow and remorse for the useless "something" she had done, away in her own room, leaving the lawyer and the doctor together.

"Poor woman!" the latter said, when his possible patroness was out of hearing; "don't you think her brain is a little affected?"

"Not more than most women's," the lawyer replied. "As sure as a woman tries to mix up romance with business, she blunders. Lady Kilcorran has put herself in a very shady place, but if she has the courage to tell her story coherently when the time for telling it comes, she'll escape with the public verdict of being very foolish; and the one she's been foolish for will learn to be less credulous for the future."

All the vultures who usually crowd round a corpse—the relations, and possible legatees, and legal dispensers of posthumous favours, came in due time to Drumleyne. The Thynnes came, and the countess, to their surprise, deported herself in almost a deferential manner to them for a day or two, till, by an assumption of knowledge, she surprised Lady Gertrude into a declaration of acquaintanceship with facts which it was essential some one should be proved to be acquainted with. And when she had done this she ceased to be deferential.

And now the day for the opening of the Cork Assizes and the commencement of Barry O'Byrne's trial arrived.

He was arraigned on a charge of having, on the night of the second of January, feloniously entered the room of Agnes Feltome, spinster, residing at the time in his mansion of O'Byrne Castle, and of having then and there wilfully murdered the same Agnes Feltome, in gaining

possession of a box hereafter to be described."

And the first witness called on behalf of the Crown for the prosecution was Mary, the pretty English housemaid, Tim Sullivan's love.

She deposed to the existence of violent ill-feeling and dislike between the deceased and the prisoner, and likewise to the existence of an evident and arbitrarily exerted power on the part of Miss Feltome over Barry O'Byrne. She favoured the Court with an irrelevant statement of her own and fellow-servants' views as to the cause of this said power, and then mentioned incidentally, in the course of severe cross-examination, that "Master had told Tim Sullivan in confidence, and Tim had mentioned to her in the same, that the secret lay in something Miss Feltome knew about the Courtes of Kilcorran," (there was a sensation here, and Barry's counsel loudly demanded the instant removal of so garrulously ignorant a witness). Being pressed and re-examined on this point, she then admitted that she had told Tim Sullivan that whatever Miss Feltome's power over

anybody might be, it was contained in the little deal box about which she had raved in her delirium, and which she always kept in a corner of her large travelling trunk. On being asked how she became possessed of this latter fact, she acknowledged that she had, during Miss Feltome's insensibility, availed herself of the golden opportunity to the extent of possessing herself of that lady's key and opening her boxes; further, that she had made known the result of her discoveries to Tim Sullivan. On being questioned as to the *personnalité* and present whereabouts of this frequently alluded-to Tim Sullivan, she burst into the tears of incapacity, and declared herself unable to speak to the latter, but that with respect to the former, "he was a young man who——" But here she was interrupted by a man in the garb of a groom stepping forward through the throng to the witness-box, and saying, "I'm Tim Sullivan, yer honour, and it's I should be where he is, for I stole the papers from her who'd poisoned his peace of mind."

(To be continued.)

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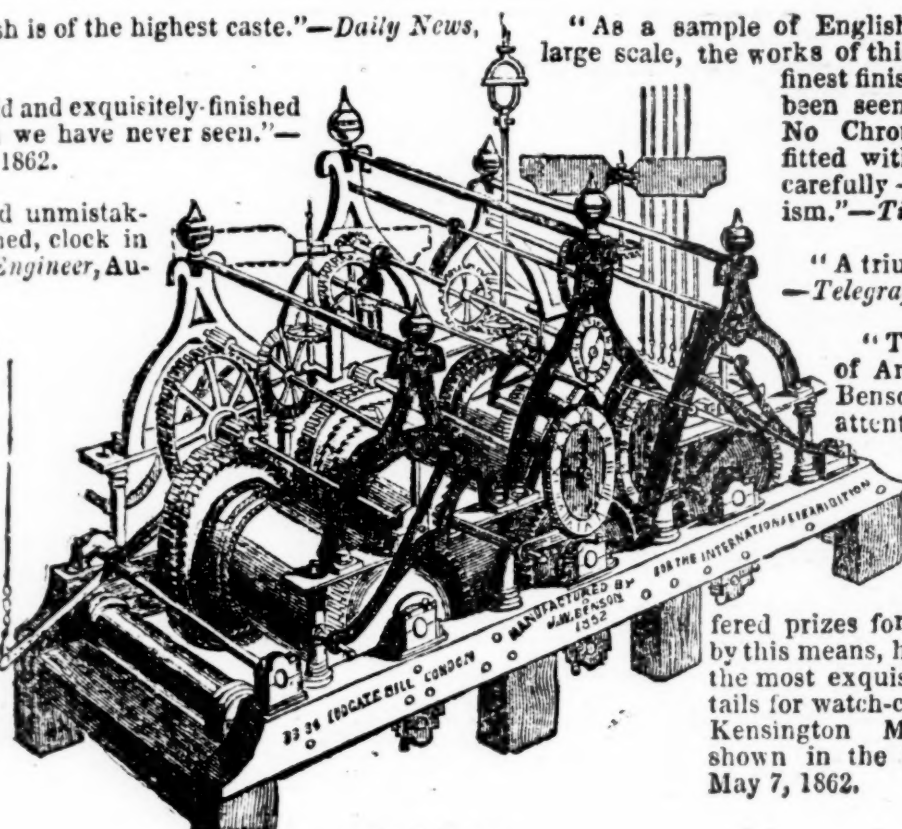
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